

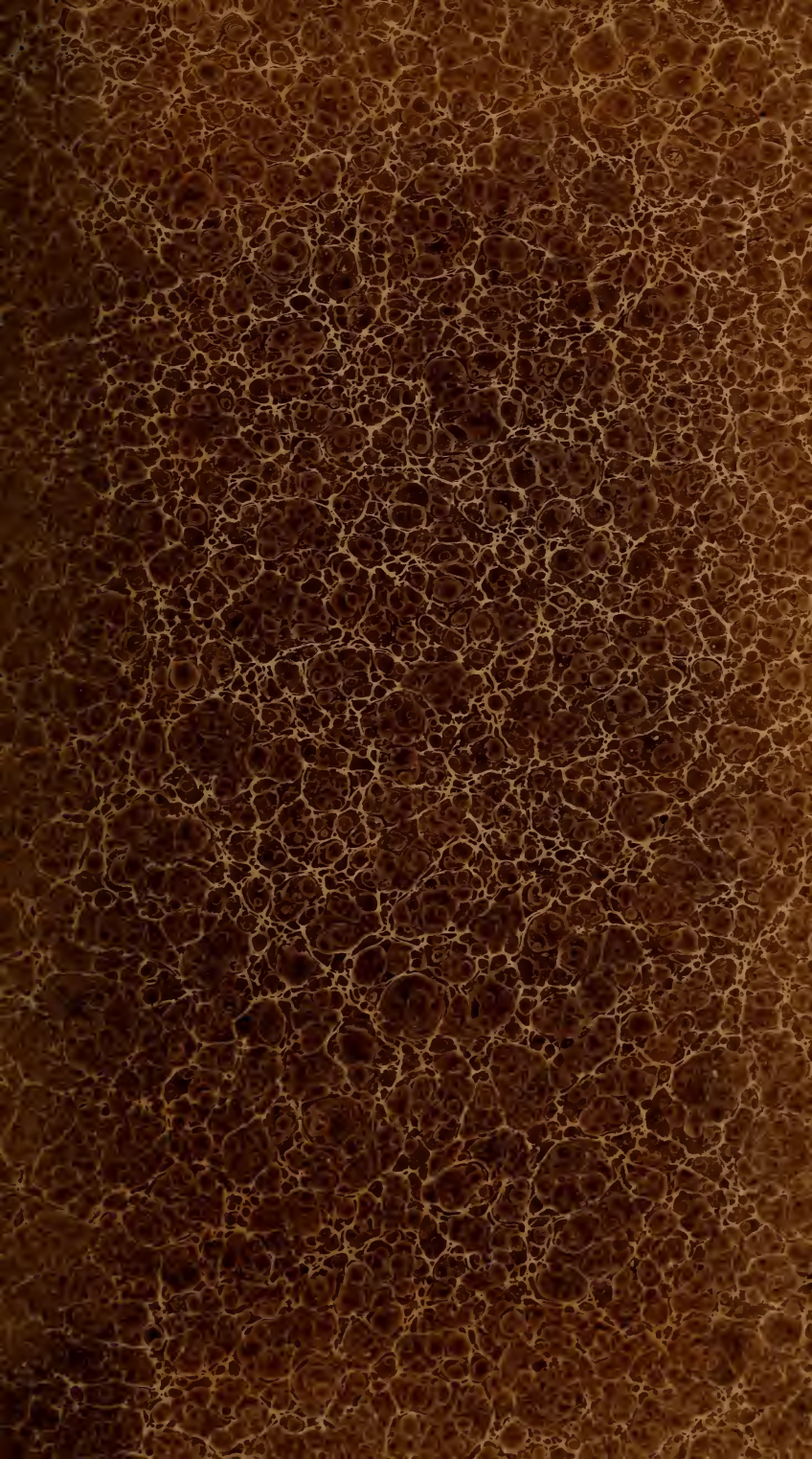
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IGNEZ DE CASTRO.

HATTON & CO., PRINTERS, 37 KING STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

IGNEZ DE CASTRO:

A Tragedy

IN FIVE ACTS;

(AS CONTRIBUTED TO HOOD'S MAGAZINE)

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "RURAL SONNETS."

LONDON:

H. HURST, 27 KING WILLIAM STREET, STRAND.

AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1846.

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TO

MISS VANDENHOFF,

WHOSE GENIUS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RENDER HER A MOST DESIRABLE REPRESENTATIVE

OF ITS HEROINE,

THIS TRAGEDY

IS INSCRIBED,

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF RESPECT AND ESTEEM,

BY HER FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

AT a time when the popular mind associates the appearance of an *unacted play* in print, with the belief that it is a *condemned one*, justice to myself entitles me to explain,—that the following Drama was written with a view to the impersonation of its Hero and Heroine by those distinguished Tragedians, Mr. and Miss Vandenhoff,—and that, after a scrupulous examination of its pretensions, they jointly *accepted the Play*, with the design of producing it, whenever an opportunity of placing it, effectively, on the stage should occur.

As the state of transition, through which theatrical matters and properties are manifestly progressing, afforded no immediate arena for the fulfilment of the purpose just disclosed,—and, as the irrational, though, till lately, insuperable, objection of Managers to a *Published Play* had been practically exploded,—“*Ignez de Castro*” was confided to the pages of HOOD’S MAGAZINE, in the conviction that its chances of ultimate representation would, now, be expedited, rather than retarded, by its transition from Manuscript into Letterpress.

Reviewers of my productions having, on more than one occasion, numbered me in the ranks of the Syncretics, I think it right to all parties to state, that I never was a member, or a supporter, of that talented body.

For the authentic Portrait prefixed to the Tragedy, I am indebted to my learned and excellent friend, John Adamson, Esq., of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, who lent me the costly copper-plate engraving from

which the impressions were taken, and which had originally furnished like impressions to the second volume of his *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Luis de Camoens*. In the preface to that elaborate work, Mr. A. explains, that "The Portrait of Dona Ignez de Castro is engraved from a print in the 'Retratos e Elogios dos Varoens e Donas que illustraram a nação Portugueza,' concerning which the Editors of the work have the following remark: 'The most ancient portrait which we could discover, and from which our print is taken, remains in the house of the most excellent the Senhor the Conde de Redondo, where it is much esteemed. The picture is not of great size; it is of excellent gothic painting, on board; and represents her features so naturally as to appear preferable to one sent us from Alcobaca, copied from the figure on her tomb. This, also, preserves the mode of dress at that time, which makes it of so much the more value.

The accordance of my dramatic story with the main facts of history I believe to be complete till it reaches the catastrophe,—where, for an obvious purpose and effect, Gonçalves is cut off, instead of escaping with Coelho, to Spain, that they might be given up, at a future period, to an execution of torture for their crime,—and where Affonso, the King, suffers the penalty of his weakness and vacillation, in a death of excitement and exhaustion on the spot, instead of surviving, some six years, to find his son and heir, at first, in arms against him; and, subsequently, but ill reconciled to a parent who had permitted the assassination of his wife,—the fountain of his happiness, and the adored of his heart.

Inner Temple, October, 1846.



Wm. P. Shelton sculp

D. IGLEZ



DE CASTRO.

IGNEZ DE CASTRO.

CHARACTERS OF THE TRAGEDY.

AFFONSO IV., <i>King of Portugal.</i>		THE ARCHBISHOP OF BRAGA.
DOM PEDRO, <i>his only Son.</i>		A SPANISH CAVALIER, <i>a natural Brother</i>
ALVARO GONÇALVES,	} <i>Chief</i> <i>Counsellors</i> <i>of the King.</i>	<i>of Iñez.</i>
DIOGO LOPES PACHECO,		GIRALDO, <i>a ruined Gentleman.</i>
PEDRO COELHO,		A SERVING MAN.

The great Officers, Courtiers, Guests, Pages, Guards, Attendants, and others of the Portuguese Court.

The Ambassadors of France, and their trains.

BEATRIZ, <i>the Queen of Portugal.</i>		THE SUPERIOR <i>of the convent of Santa</i>
DONA IGNEZ DE CASTRO, <i>the Wife of</i>		<i>Clara.</i>
<i>Dom Pedro.</i>		ZENETTA, <i>Companion of Iñez, and</i>
DINIZ,	} <i>her Children.</i>	<i>Governess of the Children.</i>
BEATRIZ,		

Nuns and Attendants.

CHIEF LOCALITIES OF THE TRAGEDY—

Lisbon, its Bay; Royal Palace; &c.
Coimbra, its Streets; outskirts; and Convent of Santa Clara.

TIME OF THE TRAGEDY—The middle of the Fourteenth Century.

DAY OF THE CATASTROPHE—January 7th, 1355.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Bay of Lisbon. In the distance, a fleet of French galleys. The royal ensign of France flying from the principal vessel. A barge is seen approaching, in another direction, from which PEDRO, his Pages, and others of his train, land. PEDRO is received by a Spanish Cavalier, with attendants bearing torches. PEDRO and the Cavalier draw forward, apart.*

PEDRO.

My trustiest friend of Spain, my dear wife's land,
For her, thou'rt trebly knit to my regard,
'Tis plain my missives reach'd you—

CAVALIER.

Yesternorn;
As safe and unobserv'd as you could wish.
The route is shorter, Prince, by land than sea!

PEDRO.

Enough to give my messenger the start,
 Say, a few leagues; and, then, more sure to thread.
 I found the winds would serve; and we have hit
 The time, with fair precision. One short hour
 Will bring us to the palace; half that time
 Repair us, robe us, sort us 'mid the throng,
 Where all my *thoughts* will be—my gentle wife!
 My *wishes*—she were by.

CAVALIER.

Forgive the zeal
 Which moots the question, whensoe'er we meet,
 Why not divulge your marriage to your sire?

PEDRO.

Not yet! not yet! I dread his dogged wrath,
 And hate his ministers. Enough—not now.
 But, teach me—yonder ships—the flag of France—
 What mean they?

CAVALIER.

Some state-exigence; its drift
 Our gossips have to probe; for none are wise,
 Except his council, and the King.

PEDRO.

Is't so?

How long have they arriv'd?

CAVALIER.

The fleet was moor'd,
 Three days ago, at Noon. A transient sun
 Lifted its mask of vapours, as to watch
 Their progress, and the instant that their freight
 Touch'd land, redropt its vigour. It was clear
 They were expected; for the beach was swarm'd
 With troops to heap them honours.

PEDRO.

I give heed.

Either his Pedro is devoid of wits, [*to himself*]
 Or my sire's plans are fathom'd. If they tend
 As I surmise—'tis strange, surpassing strange,
 I must be pester'd, still—I take a step
 To put to shame dictation, fall what will.

CAVALIER.

Why came my Prince by sea?

PEDRO.

Observe my "why!"

Chalk me a route, I'm old enough to choose,

If I can shun it, not to wend therein.
 I heard of relays, and I, straight, took ship,
 And furnish'd you alone, which way I sail'd.
 Mondego swiftly shot us to the main,
 We coasted bracingly, and keep our word.

CAVALIER.

Are you distrustful ?

PEDRO.

Never, of my sire !

But my sire's counsellors, whom I detest,
 (And, chiefmost, that Gonçalves at their head,)
 Detest me in return. I fear no harm,
 Nor will I risk it. I am shrewd, I trust !
 They dread me for my Ignez : it is best
 To guard, on every point, whom *such* men dread.

CAVALIER.

If dang'rous on the road, why not at court ?

PEDRO.

I said not they were dang'rous ; but, myself
 Cautious—perhaps, overmuch—far better that,
 Than ne'er suspicious, to repent, at last,
 Oneself hath been self-blinded.—At the court ;
 Abroad upon the streets ; I'm safe as you.
 At home, we're sanctuaris'd ! If danger be,
 (And I believe it not, but, still, as shown,
 I thwart each *possibility* I can,)
 Such danger lurks, and creeps, and shuns the light ;
 Would take the shape of accident—chance-bolt
 Of chance-directed bow—and have its fiends
 Some season'd well-paid desperadoes, plac'd
 In ambush, not in public, for *my life*,
 On which so much might hang—such ruffian-knaves
 As spill your blood for greatness, and forget,
 Greatness, to save itself, may spill their own.
 Now, when your road is known to men you hate,
 It may be known to those such men set on.
 Once more—I had no fears—suspicions—none—
 Self-confident and vigilant at once.
 But, when my enemies prescribe my path,
 I ne'er adopt it of my own free-will.

CAVALIER.

I did not chide your caution, but I fear
 Its exigence may trench upon your peace.

PEDRO.

And if it should, my Ignez is a gem
 Worthy ten misers' tremors to secure.—
 Come, gentlemen and followers, on, this way;
 Ev'ning advances; time is none to spare.

[*They go off townward.*]

SCENE. II.—*The back passage of the Palace. The interior illumination seen through the windows. Music is heard, at intervals, issuing from within. Giraldo alone.*

GIRALDO.

There, there they flock; the daws in borrow'd plumes!

[*Looking up street.*]

How swagg'ringly they swim the corners round!
 The frontage, surely, will be scant of room
 To let such towers of consequence pass through.
 I once had plumes; but they were pluck'd betimes,
 And after-feath'ring ne'er hath serv'd like then.
 I must devise resources, or I starve;
 For those who fleec'd me would not give the orts
 They waste upon their kennels; and their dogs,
 Who bark at me, have better fare than I.
 In my first flush, I held distinctions cheap,
 And emptied some, till others emptied me.
 Then came a change; the lust of play remain'd,
 Without the means; the means must still be had;
 I schem'd, and dar'd, nor scrupled; means return'd;
 But, fitfully! and so my lot was cast
 With lower company, and I was mark'd
 An outcast from the higher—such as these
 Who congregate within, where I have stalk'd
 Ere now, and scorn'd the portals; just as proud
 As yonder peacocks; may they wry their necks,
 Or moult beyond repair, the whole like me!
 Earth's plagues upon this mock'ry of my state!
 A larder empty; only memory full,
 To drive me mad, and kill me 'twixt the two.
 Those who have fed me for my table-jokes,
 (Men of the court, scarce better plac'd than grooms,
 And dignitaries of the serving-craft,)
 Seem cold and satiated—all the crew.
 Not one, at these back entrances, struts in;
 Nor one, for these carousals, will strut out.
 So, within reek of plenty, I may faint,
 And shouts of merriment perform my dirge.

[*Pauses.*]

'Tis curs'd to haunt the butt'ries when one's place
 Hath been, and should be still, the halls of state.
 I shall grow desp'rate! Foot it, featly, knaves!
 Music distract ye, as it doth mine ears,
 In which it rings exclusion, and the past.
 Now, may the richest of ye fall to broil,
 And rush to blows, where I may give my aid,
 With luck to serve the victor who'll pay best.
 I have had jobs before, some dark and strange,
 And hire, all soldiers have, both high and low.
 Gonçalves must do penance for the worst,
 His conscience, it is tough to serve for both!

[A SERVING MAN *enters.*]

SERVING MAN.

What! in the backways, when the public square
 Is quite alive with torches, and the crowds
 Are riotous to see their betters pass?

GIRALDO.

Yourself are here!

SERVING MAN.

Most true, my owl of night!

But, then, I have the entry.

[*Pointing to a doorway.*]

GIRALDO.

Some have theirs

'Midst files of smug attendants, pages, guards;
 And some 'midst herds of scullions—since we meet
 At the back entrances, twin owls of night,
 I rank you with the herd.

SERVING MAN.

Pray who is he

Who talks so largely?

GIRALDO.

You are new in place,

Or you'd salute Giraldo.

SERVING MAN.

I have heard

The chief cook, and the keeper of the wines,
 A falc'ner, and the warder of the stores,
 Discuss a boon companion of their cups,
 A gentleman, I hope I am not rude,
 Who had seen better days.

GIRALDO.

Now grasp my hand:

The def'rence you evince is undeserv'd,
 But, therefore, not less grateful.

SERVING MAN.

No offence

To ask how I can serve you?

GIRALDO.

You are right;

I have a purpose here. Tell those within,
Whom you have nam'd, and see you reach them all,
Giraldo, 'midst the flood of gen'ral joy,
Might claim a thought, at least, if not their time.
They have to waste, 'tis hard, just now, to starve.

SERVING MAN *[to himself]*.

Now, if these busy bones refuse, ere long
I'll steal away, and bring a flagon back:
I pity this poor gentleman—I do!
The risk, to night, is small—the warder comes.

*[Serving Man goes through doorway. The warder
passes hurriedly towards the doorway, without
noticing Giraldo.]*

GIRALDO.

One word, friend Bounteous!

WARDER.

Not for fifty lords!

I have been round to look upon the square.
I long'd to see how Sobersides, our Prince,
Would show without his leading-strings: alas,
Our Knight of Mistress Ignez, for my pains,
Hath not arriv'd as yet; but, since I felt
Nothing could stir without me, lo, I left;—
The scene, without, is splendid—what, within?

[Offering to go.]

GIRALDO.

One word!

WARDER.

You're troublesome.

GIRALDO.

Indeed?

WARDER.

Indeed!

Bethink how indispensable I am.

GIRALDO *[produces a dice box.]*

Will't try a throw?

WARDER.

Your stakes?

GIRALDO.

Throw first, and win.

WARDER.

I am too keen ; when coins are in your purse,
 They are forthcoming ever ; now, you've none.
 I will not throw,—to win, and not be paid ;
 Or lose, and pay, as *you* will not, young man !

GIRALDO.

If I had coins, you'd tarry ; as I've none,
 Bethink how indispensable you are.

[*Waving him forward ; Warder goes in.*]

Our Sobersides, indeed ! what other heir
 But would find work for gentlemen like me,
 To ruffle for him, and promote his sports,
 And make his crownward years one age of joy.
 I will draw off beneath yon gloomy porch,
 And watch till this man's man redeem his word.
 So, I am pauperis'd to such extreme,
 I'm spurn'd on this hand, pitied upon that—
 To stamp the degradation more complete,
 Pitied—of poverty ! 'twere ill—of wealth !
 Oh, curse the dice ! and that seductive fiend
 Who taught them to the world, to drive men mad.
 This fellow's sluggish ; would he were come back :
 The night is raw—I'm cold, both mind and limbs.

[*Retires by the side opposite to that at which he had been watching the distant throng.*]

SCENE III.—*A grand court-festival and ball. The KING and the QUEEN seated on thrones, under a canopy, surmounted with the arms of Portugal. A place vacant for Pedro, the heir apparent. King's Chamberlain, gentlemen-halberdiers, guards of the body, pages, and others, at their respective posts. Groups of native nobles, and ladies of quality, mixed with a few Spanish hidalgos, and other foreigners of distinction, promenading the illuminated halls. Some being presented, and doing homage. A music loft, or gallery, overlooking the scene. A flourish of trumpets and music, without.*

[*The Ambassadors of France, and their train, enter. They are received with a salute of music from within, while being ushered to the steps of the throne. The KING rises, and descends one step, to receive and greet them.*]

KING.

Here, in her representatives, we greet
 The Majesty of France ; and, by our Queen,

Assign their post of honour ; while ourselves,
Like them, unbending from the cares of state,
Hold festival, and celebrate their stay.

QUEEN.

Fair France is uppermost in all our thoughts,
Whose proxies show so goodly in our sight.
As we are royal, royally, we trust
To entertain, in you, our great ally.

AMBASSADOR.

Your great ally, so honourably nam'd,
Through us, accepts these greetings, and returns.

KING.

Let music add new pinions to our joy,
Some strain of that sweet country these adorn.

QUEEN.

A strain of France la Belle !

ALL.

A strain, a strain !

[*A French air of the middle of the fourteenth century is played.*]

COURTIERS.

Long live the King !

KING [*rising*].

Now fill the pledge-cup high,
We drink to John of France.

QUEEN [*pledging the cup*].

To John the Good !

COURTIERS.

Long live King John of France !

ALL.

King John the Good !

AMBASSADOR.

France, by her mission, drinks a meet reply
To King Affonso, and his bounteous Queen.
We would include the Infante, whom we—miss—

[*Looking around.*]

But that his rank demands a sep'rate pledge.

KING.

His chair is here, and he will grace it, soon ;
He's us'd to keep his time less strict than we.

AMBASSADOR.

Tariffa's victor, and the dark Moor's scourge,
 Our host—our sov'reign's faithfullest ally—
 'Twould gratify thy guests would'st thou command
 (Thy goodness pardon us if we presume)
 Those strains, that stirring triumph of thy reign,
 Which Music weds to Fame.

KING.

Ye flatter, lords!
 Tariffa's vict'ry be the echoing theme!
 Now, worthily of us, and list'ning France,
 Rout we, again, the Moors.

COURTIERS.

Long live the King!
[A martial triumph played.]

KING.

Some years are sped (they cannot be recall'd)
 Since, sword in hand, amid that battle's roar,
 I hew'd a dozen infidels to earth.

AMBASSADOR.

A throne befits a Hero.

KING.

France hath skill
 In compliment.

AMBASSADOR.

When Conq'rors are her praise.

KING.

The spirit of the hour is on our heart;
 We will descend, and triumph with the throng.

*[KING hands QUEEN down the steps of the throne,
 and transfers her to the attendance of the chief
 Ambassador.]*

Come, ladies all, a measure of our land,
 To tempt these younger Frenchmen to the dance.

*[KING, attended by Gonçaves and three or four
 Nobles, ranges up and down amidst the scene.
 Neither King nor Queen dances.]*

[A group of Nobles come forward.]

FIRST NOBLE.

I judge th' ambassador would give his star
 To be reliev'd his bargain, tho' it be
 A queen!

SECOND NOBLE.

And she's no flitter; it is sport
 To watch old Volatile, how mock-res'gn'd
 He simpers in her leading-strings; observe
 The bant'ring Countess, bless her for the joke,
 Is ogling him to madness; fret your fill,
 Old Gadabout, you dare not quit the Queen.

THIRD NOBLE.

As queens are never aged, happy man! [*Sarcastically.*]

SECOND NOBLE.

The rest are nimble-legs, these seigneurs, see,
 They tread our stately measures half afisk.

THIRD NOBLE.

What brought them here?

SECOND NOBLE.

Stout galleys.

THIRD NOBLE.

That's not wit.

SECOND NOBLE.

The next shall be.

THIRD NOBLE.

Unless it mar our talk.

Let Mar-talk answer me, what brought these here?
 If he guess rightly, that shall pass for sense.

FIRST NOBLE.

O Solon, are you wroth?

THIRD NOBLE.

I may be, soon.

SECOND NOBLE.

You shall not be, for I will curb my vein.

THIRD NOBLE.

They came so unexpectedly.

FIRST NOBLE.

By *us*;—

Gonçalves was not startled when they came!

SECOND NOBLE.

Nor was the King!

THIRD NOBLE.

Ye know not?

FIRST NOBLE.

We know more.

THIRD NOBLE.

Ye are grown wise.

SECOND NOBLE.

Thou slanderer of my wit!

FIRST NOBLE.

I will be *wise*, and, thus *my* wisdom kens,
They have some salic lumber they would vend,
And Pedro is their price.

THIRD NOBLE.

The blood of France
Will never tempt him while his Iñez lives.
He wed again? An angel ripe from heav'n
Ne'er could put Iñez out of his conceit.

FIRST NOBLE.

Better the blood of France, far distant France,
Than her's, or any of too neighb'ring Spain.

SECOND NOBLE.

Spain rul'd us once, and she would rule once more.

FIRST NOBLE.

And will, if Iñez live till Pedro reign.
Her kin are num'rous, subtle, apt to climb.

THIRD NOBLE.

They are the Spain you dread!

SECOND NOBLE.

Upon our heels,
And thrusting us aside, to clear them room.

FIRST NOBLE.

I would the witch were dead.

SECOND NOBLE.

'Twere best for all.

FIRST NOBLE.

Now, by my glove, the Countess steers this way.

THIRD NOBLE.

Sailing majestically!

SECOND NOBLE.

Sail we off?

THIRD NOBLE.

And set at nought her signals?

SECOND NOBLE.

Be her prey!

[*Moroscly.*

FIRST NOBLE.

Our gallantry's at stake.

THIRD NOBLE.

And, if you fly
In face of her attempts to bring you to,
You fly at your own peril.

SECOND NOBLE.

What will ye ?

FIRST NOBLE.

Play Job, as help is none—her yoke, one night,
Were better than her tongue, henceforth, our scourge.

THIRD NOBLE.

Old Volatile's in leading-strings! [Taunting.

SECOND NOBLE.

Be dumb! [Angrily.

[Countess, and her sister, an aged lady of quality, come
up to the nobles.]

COUNTESS.

My jewels of the court, and dearest friends,
How joy'd we are to find you; for our Lord,
Lumbagoed on his couch, hath launch'd us forth
To do a twofold homage—his—our own.
Our sister here, (this venerated maid,) [whispered.
Will grace *your* tendance.

[Handing her sister to second Noble, who, just before,
was chuckling at the Ambassador's being restricted
to attend on the Queen.

While ourself, assail'd
By yonder aged henchman of the Queen,
Will fortify our virtue on each hand,
[Placing herself between the other two.
And drive our foreign rover jealous-mad.

FIRST NOBLE.

The honour is supreme.

THIRD NOBLE.

Ye saints, be deaf! [Aside.

COUNTESS.

A goodly couple!—True, the lady's years
[Quizzing second Noble and her Sister.
Are somewhat more autumnal than her knight's;
But, then, the fadeless beauties of her mind!
He'll need no preacher else, while she is nigh.

FIRST NOBLE.

It were no flatt'ry, be it no offence,
To say ourselves are happier than our friend.

COUNTESS.

Oh! I am unimpressible: say on;
My sister's very well; pray, what am I?

FIRST NOBLE.

Charming.

COUNTESS.

That's tame!

THIRD NOBLE.

Surpassing all your sex.

COUNTESS.

In what?

FIRST NOBLE.

In beauty.

COUNTESS.

Sir, you're out of grace:
My champion was to speak, whom you'd forestall.
In what do I surpass?

THIRD NOBLE.

In wit.

COUNTESS.

Enough!

Our penitent this side, bestows me, *charms*.

[*"charms" pronounced with a drawl.*]

Coo on, Idolators! the Frenchman sees;
Coo on, and let us near him—this way, beaux!

[*As the Nobles go up the stage, the King's party,
with Gonçaves, come down.*]

KING.

Where is our son? he lives, it would appear,
To train us his apologists; e'en now,
I mark'd, and lik'd it not, that France was keen
To note he was not punctual.

GONÇALVES.

Gracious Sire,

Your autograph-despatch, (he ne'er will stir
Without it, reckless how your strength's o'ertasked)
Commanding him to honour this great feast,
Reach'd him, at Coimbra, three full days ago;
'Th' expresses are return'd, and on the road,
Saddled the relays ready for your son.
I fear this Ignez stays him.

KING.

'Gainst *our* will?

GONÇALVES.

Her will, with *him*, is royal more than *thine*.

KING.

It must be so no longer. These of France,
 As we have conn'd, are very opportune.
 Since Spain's so monster-rul'd, and England's strange,
 To knit, to our advantage, as their own,
 The best alliance of these troublous times
 Which we may win, and use. 'Tis very clear
 Our policy's with France; and France, in him,
 Wooes us, and our successor. We were mad
 To humour him and Ignez, at the cost
 Of state-security, and strengthen'd power.
 His private will *must* yield, and ought, and *shall*,
 So Pedro weds this Princess they propose.

[*Pedro enters above, with Attendants, but without parade.*]

GONÇALVES.

If he refuse.

KING.

No ifs in such a cause.

Am I not father to him, and his king!

You must seek Ignez.

GONÇALVES.

From yourself?

KING.

Betimes;

And warn her she must part; but let her learn,
 Her dowry shall be royal; her retreat
 Self-chosen, and kept sacred by ourself.
 Ha! do I see our Mule?—and come by stealth,
 When shouts, and trumpets should proclaim our heir?
 We should be ceremonious, when a state
 So haught as France observes us in our best.

GONÇALVES.

It is his way.

KING.

A way that shall be chang'd.

[*King, followed by Gonçalves and the party, goes up and joins Pedro's party.—King and Pedro converse earnestly, apart.—King introduces Pedro to Ambassadors.*]

[*The Dances proceed.*]

[*After a time, Pedro and his father draw off, in different directions, each attended by their immediate followers.—Pedro, saluted as he passes among the company, and coldly returning their salutes, comes forward, conversing with the Spanish cavalier.—Pedro's other friends, and pages, in the rear.*]

CAVALIER.

Will not your Highness dance?

PEDRO.

Not I; enough

To do mock-courtesies against the grain.—
My mother and th' ambassador may skip;
My father, if he list, grow lithe again;
I will not dance to please him.

CAVALIER.

You are ill?

PEDRO.

I am offended! I was summon'd here,
By letters manual, just like those of old,
To celebrate my name-day; nothing more!
I should enjoy the day far best at home,
But that long usage drags me thus abroad.
I come reluctantly, and, lo, I find
A trap is baited for the *needful* heir.
Ambassadors are planted in my path,
To tempt me, on the spot, to match with France.
As if I were the fool for sudden freaks
To vantage any body but myself.
My father measures me, both wits and will,
As ignorantly as his tools could wish.
My *soul* is wed, at least, ev'n he would grant!
My body's faith is mine, not his to guide.

CAVALIER.

So little was the Ambassage foreseen,
It took the court by start.

PEDRO.

The gen'ral Court;
Not so, the Cabinet; the move is theirs
And France is witch'd to follow.

CAVALIER.

France will chafe.

PEDRO.

Let her ; she chafes at nothing half her days ;
It will be new to have a real cause.

CAVALIER.

It may embroil the realm.

PEDRO.

My idol's peace
Is dear beyond all kingdoms of the earth.

CAVALIER.

Well vow'd for Spain's sweet Ignez.

PEDRO.

She's a pearl
Surpassing price, I've won, and will not lose.
I'll cut these rude negotiations short ;
Who thought to *catch* us, let them catch—the air !
Come hither, boy—[*To Page*]—our party ride, e'er dawn ;
We'll trot my father's horses for his grooms,
Who are behaz'd already with their cheer ; [To Cavalier.
A morning's search, some leagues upon the road,
Will cool the rogues, and give them back the steeds.
Where the last relay waits to bring us here,
Be it first changing-post to speed us hence.
Our serving-men are trusty, and apart,
A caution I have found to serve me oft.
Go unobserv'd—[*To Page*]—tell Dias, no one else,—
He will arrange it. [Page goes out.

When our sire retires, [To Cavalier.

We may quit, too, and give offence to none.
Then, then, to horse—the moon to cheer our race,
The gate of Ignez e'er we check our rein !

[*Pedro and suite go up. They pass the Countess, and two Nobles, in the act of meeting her Sister and the other Noble as they come down the stage—Pedro coldly returns their salute.*

COUNTESS.

We've found you, then, at last—a pretty trick
To play at turtle-doves, and wing afar
From sage protectors like ourselves.

SISTER,

Indeed !

I am the party wrong'd. 'Twas you, Ma'am, you
Who slipp'd away, and smuggled in your train
These captive gallants—I *will* speak the truth—
To use them up in torturing their sex :
I pity the Ambassador.

COUNTESS.

Not *me*?

SISTER.

A pretty case for pity—sigh'd for, *there*;
 [Pointing to French Ambassador.
 Twin-champion'd *here*, and humour'd :

[Pointing to two Nobles.

COUNTESS.

What are you?

How strange a maiden lady should regret
 Her worshipper's a unit, and this same
 Single, not singular! my dearest lord,
 Are you not happy?

SECOND NOBLE.

Happy! (as an owl.)

[Aside.

SISTER.

He has not spoken once, except to drawl,
 Or ay, or no, in answer to remarks
 He left me all to manage.

[Aside.

COUNTESS.

You have been

High eloquent, no doubt?

[To Second Noble.

SECOND NOBLE.

Your Sister's tongue

Must claim the eloquence, and I the bliss
 To drink, in mute enravishment, the whole.

[Winking to one of the Nobles.

SISTER.

Oh, why not speak so while we were alone!
 He's voluble enough whene'er he please.
 Now Sister, do not boast.

[Aside.

SECOND NOBLE.

The Frenchman's eyes

Are fascinated, still.

COUNTESS.

Although his steps
 Are duty-chain'd to grandeur. By my fan,
 He wears the leash, as puppies undertrain'd,
 Who tug against it stoutly. Noble hearts,
 Do you not pity from your inmost souls
 A male in leading-strings? [Glancing at Second Noble.

THIRD NOBLE.

Like his?

FIRST NOBLE.

Sweet Dame,
Service is joyous, when the serv'd is fair;
We bow to thee, and criticize none else.

SISTER.

For fear you should be criticiz'd.

COUNTESS.

None else?

Not your own Queen?

THIRD NOBLE.

Forbid it!

COUNTESS.

Truant Sir,
Who stole away to win my Sister's sighs?
Do you not pity France? were France less sly,
The Queen would catch him casting looks at me.

SISTER.

What would she do?

COUNTESS.

Philosophize, and laugh.

SISTER.

Endure his misallegiance?

COUNTESS.

Perhaps, promote!

SISTER.

Perhaps! because you're the object.

COUNTESS.

Tattler, fie!

You'll need your champion to protect you yet.
Bid him refurbish all his wits, at once;
And harness to come forth in beauty's fight.

SISTER.

Dear, Lord, we'll walk apart; my sister's craz'd,
The Frenchman's homage turns her flippant brain.
Now, he might stare at *me* till staring blind,
He should not have *my* arm—so old a fright!

[Retiring with Second Noble up the Stage.]

COUNTESS.

To twit my sister for her crabbed ways,
I had o'erlook'd, how sour Dom Ignez seem'd.

FIRST NOBLE.

Dom Ignez?

COUNTESS.

Ay, the man that's lost, like him,
For ever purring round his malkin's feet,
Name him—his she-pet's name, and not his own.

THIRD NOBLE.

Dom Ignez must not hear us.

COUNTESS.

If he did,
I'd face him, and maintain, the Kingdom's heir
Should prove the Court's best life.

FIRST NOBLE.

And smile on

COUNTESS.

All!

FIRST NOBLE.

If Ignez heard!

COUNTESS.

The Dona, or the Dom?

FIRST NOBLE.

The Dona.

COUNTESS.

If! [*contemptuously*]

THIRD NOBLE.

He's not the fool to wed!

COUNTESS.

Why, if he were, let aliens hold her train.

FIRST NOBLE.

Not sparklers like yourself?

COUNTESS.

I were craz'd.
[*A trumpet-call.*]

FIRST NOBLE.

The dances flag, and more substantial claims
Summon their votaries—to eat and drink!

COUNTESS.

The trumpets challenge royally!

FIRST NOBLE.

They ought,

When halls of banquet—

COUNTESS.

Sneerer, hold your peace !
 You have not seen as I have—if you had,
 You cannot paint as I can—so, be dumb.
 The board's ablaze with gold and jewell'd plate,
 And ornaments of filagree ; and cups,
 Translucent, or of silver, boss'd, or plain.
 Above—amidst—in flaming bright array,
 Pensile, and standard lights o'erbranch the scene ;
 While chrystal sconces stretch along the walls,
 In rainbow-rich refractions ; and, from shapes
 Fantastical, curl forth the censer's streams.
 The interspaces glow with burnish'd arms,
 A panoply of breast-plates—helms—and spears—
 Gauntlets—and battle-axes—greaves—and spurs—
 And swords—and shields, like mirrors in the sun.
 Gigantic fans of peacocks' plumes, aloft,
 At either end, are wav'd by subtle means,
 And stir the air, and much refresh the eyes.
 The roof's festoon'd with evergreens ; beneath,
 Vases with flowers look fragrant as the morn.
 In six recesses, ceaseless fountains jet,
 Rose-scented showers, and sparkling—plac'd on high,
 Minstrels, with thrilling harp, and glorious verse,
 Exalt the festival : below, a band
 Of youths and maids, now dancing, now at rest,
 Shed poetry on motion—group—and form.
 I'm rapt to say they do so, ere 'tis done.
 Let's in, and help all forward ! Knights, lead on.
 One grand resource for pause of step, or song,
 Our martial music takes unusual place,
 Where Moorish standards, droop'd above his chair,
 Record our Sovereign's feats, and Lusian fame.
 All was illuminated ere we met ;
 I have the priv'lege ; the display's superb.
 Let us not lag, to be the last behind ;
 I sit between my heroes—not next, France !

THIRD NOBLE.

No fault of his.

FIRST NOBLE.

But we may thank the Queen. [*Aside.*

[*The company retire, by degrees, through the upper doorways.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Chief apartment of Ignez in the Convent of Santa Clara, at Coimbra. An Oriel-window at the extremity. A curtained recess; the curtains open; a couch within it. Ignez at embroidery; Diniz watching her; her companion Zenetta, Governess of the children, amusing Beatriz.*

BEATRIZ.

Sing, Netta, sing.

ZENETTA (*chaunting, as nursery rhymes*).

Myrtle-blooms, and orange-flowers;
Jasmine-wreaths, and rosy bowers;
Busy thoughts, and happy hours;
All the bells in Coimbra's towers
Shall ring for my little lady.

[*Diniz runs up to her.*

DINIZ.

Father wrote some for me!

ZENETTA.

Polish'd arms, and neighing steeds;
Lofty aims, and patriot deeds;
Wisdom, which to virtue leads;
Chivalry, the creed of creeds;
Some day for my little hero.

DINIZ.

Where are the bells? I love the bells the best!

ZENETTA.

When arms and steeds have won the fight;
And aims and deeds sustain'd "the right;"
Then, all the bells, with all their might,
My grown-up hero shall delight.

DINIZ.

How long to wait! I want to hear them now.

BEATRIZ.

The birdies warble ?

ZENETTA.

By and by, my pet,
They will break forth.

DINIZ.

Ha ! mother, are you sure
My golden pheasant will awake no more ?

IGNEZ.

Sweet Diniz, it is dead ; but, in its place,
Another golden beauty shall be thine.

DINIZ.

'Tis not the same ; my poor bird lov'd me so.

IGNEZ.

It could not sing.

DINIZ.

It fed from out my hand :
It look'd like music.

ZENETTA.

You will turn us sad.

DINIZ.

Mother, the birdies mope ; Zenette is dull ;
Give us the wind-harp's songs.

IGNEZ.

Why, they are sad !

DINIZ.

Sometimes, but, often, not—then, let them sing.

IGNEZ.

My chatt'rer, if you will.

[*Zenetta places a wind-harp in the casement.*]

DINIZ.

Hush, sister, hush !

And mother dear ! Zenetta, tune the chords.

[*The different Eolian variations imitated.*]

That's like a dirge !

ZENETTA.

Your pheasant needs it, child !

IGNEZ.

No more of that ; his little heart is pain'd.
 Poor babe, may greater cause ne'er, ne'er be thine.
 Now, that is loud—like wild winds rush'd to fight,
 With waves that roar against them.

[*Beatriz creeps close to Zenetta.*]

DINIZ.

Like a storm,

They howl again.

IGNEZ.

But, hark, that lulling fall,
 It laps the senses in a swoon of bliss.
 Sweet Diniz, Beatriz, now close your eyes,
 And dose upon Elysium.

DINIZ.

Mother, say,

Are the winds haunted ?

IGNEZ.

You are not afraid ?

DINIZ.

Their voices moan so strangely.

IGNEZ.

Take it down. [*to Zenetta.*]

DINIZ.

Not yet ! I'll cling to *you*, and list again.

IGNEZ.

Come, lay your little heads upon our laps,
 And soothe yourselves to sleep.

DINIZ.

Where's father, now ?

[*As if craving his presence, from a sense of mysterious fear.*]

IGNEZ.

At court, my boy, at court. [*As if pained.*]

DINIZ.

You told me once,

Tell me again, dear mother, what is court ?

IGNEZ.

A scene of grandeur, not a scene of home ;
 And we are happiest here.

[*Beatriz having fallen asleep, Zenetta places her on a couch in the recess, the curtains still remaining open, —Zenetta takes down the harp.*]

DINIZ.

Is father, then,

Unhappy ?

IGNEZ.

Not so happy as with us.

DINIZ.

Why goes he ? I should like to go as well.

IGNEZ.

Some day, some day ! now prattle of your hound,
The delicate Sardinian.

DINIZ.

Run, Zenette,
And fetch it : my man, Gard'ner, keeps it warm.

IGNEZ.

Another time, my Diniz.

DINIZ.

'Tis my own !

IGNEZ.

And sister's, Diniz—it doth play with both.

DINIZ.

What do they at the court ? Why do not you
Go there, with us, and father, and Zenette ?

IGNEZ.

Ask me no more ; your father, when return'd,
Shall teach you what they do—how fine and grand.

DINIZ.

We will be there, next feast.

IGNEZ [*aside.*]

We ought ; alas !

This secret of our marriage should be broach'd.

It wounds me when, with innocence, his eyes

Ask me such questions I can ne'er explain.

We have done wrong, since wedded, to remain

World-branded otherwise—

DINIZ.

Do tell me, when

Dear father will come back.

IGNEZ.

He sail'd, my boy,

To keep his name-day, as we kept it here,

In yesterday's more quiet home-delights.

DINIZ.

We were as merry as the day was long,
Tho' you were, sometimes, sad.

IGNEZ.

For love of all,—

Never observe it, Diniz!—You would count,
When father will come back; as custom rules,
This fete-day will be follow'd by some more,
As gay, and as exuberant of show.
We miss him, for the while, a few dull days,
And father will restore us to his arms.

DINIZ.

I wish the days were past.

IGNEZ.

A kiss for that!

If his boy long for him, his fond wife pines.

DINIZ.

Tune us the harp again, and I will sleep.

IGNEZ.

And dream he's here?

DINIZ.

Do *you*?

IGNEZ.

Each night, my child!

[*Zenetta, mounting to replace the harp, exclaims—*

ZENETTA.

Oh! joy, joy, joy! the prince, the prince and train!

[*Jumping down, and laying aside the harp.*

How beautif'ly their torchlight paints the whole.

IGNEZ.

Joy, joy indeed! if nothing speed him home

But love for us—no bick'ring with his sire,

No quarrel with his ministers, no feud.

Come, Diniz dear, his foot is on the steps,

At least 'tis in the court-yard—come, child, come.

[*Hurries towards the door, her countenance betraying anxiety; just as she reaches it, Pedro enters rapidly.*

PEDRO.

Pride of mine eyes, and comfort of my heart!

My swan of beauty! and my bird of song!

My nightingale! my summer through the year!

My heaven on earth! my brooding, timid dove!

[*Kisses her affectionately—she looks up in his face in tearful silence.*

PEDRO.

Would Diniz join his romps among my train?
They have some presents for him—and for all.

DINIZ.

Ring out the bells for joy. Come on, Zenette.
[*Diniz and Zenetta go out trippingly.*]

IGNEZ.

Speak, speak, there's something, Pedro?

PEDRO.

You are safe.

Heaven, and the church,

IGNEZ.

And Pedro,

PEDRO.

Guard my wife.
[*Caressing her.*]

IGNEZ.

From what?

PEDRO.

Be tranquilliz'd; there's naught to dread:
I am but anger'd, not my Ignez harm'd.
[*Ignez listens intently.*]

I went to court to keep the usual fete,
My summons was none other, as you read.
When I arriv'd, there burst upon my view,
(Concerted by my father and his tools)
A rare intrigue—full blown—to take me in,
With suddenness and circumstance, at once:—
For there, to cut off my retreat, I found
France, by a stately ambassage, engag'd
To wed with Portugal!

IGNEZ.

The twain are friends.

PEDRO.

Ay, but the heir of Portugal allied,
By marriage, to a royal dame of France,
The Countries, they maintain'd, were wedded too,
As wedded they'll ne'er prove.

IGNEZ.

My own, my own!
You left them to their schemes?

PEDRO.

And flew to thee.

For cold, my Ignez, were the gorgeous scene,
 At any time, to home: but chill indeed,
 Where underhand entrapment mock'd with smiles,
 And would-be state-coercion mimick'd joy.
 Hollow hearts, Ignez, half the gaudy throng,
 And gewgaws, *their* great objects—heart-truths, *mine*!

IGNEZ.

You left the Court abruptly?

PEDRO.

With the dawn,

Taking no leave; disturbing no one's rest! [*sarcastically.*
 It will be sport when France shall rub her eyes,
 And ask her yawning host—Where, Sire, 's your son"?

IGNEZ.

Fate rule it tend to "sport," nor lead to strife.
 Yet, I am grateful, e'en if Love were rash.

PEDRO.

Now, Ignez will approve, for very pride,
 My plan to end their schemings—when we've chang'd,
 [*She starts.*

Refresh'd, and rested, we set forth anew,
 To be beyond the Missiles of the Court,
 My Father's importunities, and theirs.
 My friends and train—instructed we depart,
 But none entrusted whither—wait my call;
 Eager to ride, fresh mounted, full of glee.
 We shall wend east, some leagues, then, double, north,
 To hunt those spacious forests, out of reach,
 Which skirt old Bragelone's immense domains.
 Your nat'ral brother, whom we plac'd at Court
 To watch our enemies, I've brought along
 To sojourn close beside you, safe at hand
 To give you counsel, and companionship,
 And keep me in the light of what transpires.
 Whene'er he shall report, the Franks take wing,
 I fly to thee and home.

IGNEZ.

Oh, grief and joy,

Distressingly confus'd to drink your words!
 I'm sad to lose you, tho' the time be short:
 But proud your going stamps you all mine own.
 I'm griev'd your father knows not we are one:

Altho' convinced you judge it for the best.
Oh, that we err not, there! a dread, by fits,
O'er shadows me—but, Pedro, husband, go!

PEDRO.

We will prepare—what Missives reach you, keep;
What Messengers, dismiss them as advis'd.

IGNEZ.

Zenette shall take our place.

PEDRO.

And tend our lamb.

[*Looking towards recess.*
[*They go forth.*]]

SCENE. II.—*The Queen's closet in the Palace at Lisbon.—The Queen and the Archbishop of Braga enter, conversing.*

ARCHBISHOP.

Oh, rash impetuous Prince!

QUEEN.

His Sire the King,

My husband, is arous'd beyond controul.
Our honour's pledg'd to France; retreat is none!
Both are impetuous, son and royal sire.
Had he ask'd me—the plan was hidd'n from all,
Until they reach'd our waters—I had urg'd,
Ere France had been invited, Pedro's mind
Had first been ascertain'd; for lack of this,
Our sovereign is committed in a way,
I wot not how proud France shall be appeas'd.

ARCHBISHOP.

What course will first be tried?

QUEEN.

The fetes proceed;

The King himself hath humbled, to go forth
And soothe the ambassage; and ask their grace,
And patience, while we trace our fitful heir.

ARCHBISHOP.

His sudden flight perplexes every plan.

QUEEN.

The King pourtray'd him freaksome; quite unus'd
To bear the curb; and, taken by surprise,
(An ill disclosure, that) displeas'd with *him*;
This flight, a mode to vex his Father's will,
No disrespect to France.

ARCHBISHOP.

So far, 'tis right ;

But, will he promise still ?

QUEEN.

Unless restrain'd.

Yet, if he do, he promises in vain,
Or I misconstrue Pedro, heart and soul ;
So, matters tend to darken.

ARCHBISHOP.

Passing strange,
No head in council could forecast this chance,
Tho' Pedro's fiery will, and moody ways,
Have set them tasks *before*.

QUEEN.

The foolish scheme,
(Most foolish certainly, if doom'd to fail,
Grant, in that case, it wax not full of fate)
This scheme which thrall'd my husband's better sense,
Intoxicated *him* ; and keeps him blind.
His Parasites I blame, and brand them such,
Howe'er his ministers may brook the name,
Who humour'd, where their duty and their state,
Pledg'd them to cool advice, and wise controul :
They should have check'd their master, not impell'd.

ARCHBISHOP.

Gonçalves is a man *I* never lik'd ;
His look is sinister ; his movements strange ;
He rules the rest ; I would the King curb'd *him*.

QUEEN.

He hath set off, no less a man than he,
With scarce a common escort—I divine,
This strange, and sudden mission finds him charg'd
To gain a secret intervied, and try,
If Ignez may be terrified, or brib'd,
To fly from Pedro,

ARCHBISHOP.

Oh mistaken King !

Queen, he will fail ?

QUEEN.

The mother in my heart
Echoes, he will.

ARCHBISHOP.

The course the King pursues
Reveals strong fears, his *son* will not be turn'd.

Oh, lady of the land ! with love like theirs,
 And precious helpless babes,—poor innocents
 That need them both—an old man, looking on,
 Maintaineth to his Queen, how'er she chide,
 Your son should not be turn'd !

QUEEN.

Your Queen assents,
 Nature within me spurns the creed of pride,
 I cannot aid the sacrifice it craves.
 No, no, maternity and natural love
 For Pedro, and for those on whom he doats,
 Long, long have made me wish, with all my soul,
 His Ignez and himself, whom none should part,
 Were married, as they might be, and receiv'd.
 But a *wife's* duty, and a Queen's, forbids
 I should suggest a match my husband dreads.
 I warn'd you as we met, how passing wroth
 The news hath turn'd the King ; when left alone,
 Seek him and soothe his mind, as you are skill'd ;
 If your tact serve to pacify his mood,
 Possess him with the reasons we have conn'd.
 The wound of these, with wisdom, may be heal'd,
 Tho' Pedro wed with Spain, and not with France.
 I must within awhile, to other cares ;
 Lord Prelate, till we meet again, farewell.

ARCHBISHOP.

Heaven guard, and guide, and keep you to the last,
 My gentle Lady, and my virtuous Queen.

SCENE III.—*Three Officers of the escort of Gonçalves carousing
 in a small room of an Inn in the suburbs of Coimbra.*

FIRST OFFICER.

This is poor lodging.

SECOND OFFICER.

What ! you miss the court ?

THIRD OFFICER.

A variation in a soldier's life. [*Shrugging his shoulders.*]
 A soldier need be fancy-fraught, and, then,
 He looks thro' Media which shed over things,
 Common and vile, the colours of the rose.
 The hostess of mine Inn is—Juno, lads !
 The serving lass—a Hebe !—and the wine—
 Elixir !

FIRST OFFICER.

If not sour.

THIRD OFFICER.

Commend your "if!"

This is not sour—so, Hebe, when 'tis drain'd, [Drinking.
 Shall waft us more—This draught to Hebe's bloom.

SECOND OFFICER.

Whom pledg'd you at the banquet?

THIRD OFFICER.

I forget,

Some spruce nonentity.

FIRST OFFICER.

A joke of jokes,

To seek this spruce nonentity, some day,
 And tattle how her champion of the ball,
 Held her of nonaccount.

THIRD OFFICER.

I care not, I!

FIRST OFFICER.

What doth this jaunt portend?

THIRD OFFICER.

The prince hath fled

From court, and we race after him—For what?
 To coax him to return.

SECOND OFFICER.

Or I am deaf,

Or, from one single phrase old Gruff let fall,

[They listen earnestly.

(He hath a trick to mutter to himself,
 When o'erexcited, and beside his vein),
 He lurks for Ignez; Pedro he would shun.
 In truth, Gonçalves seeks her, from the King,
 To bribe her off to Spain, if so he can.

THIRD OFFICER.

So he cannot, however he may strive.
 I lack my wits, if ever Gruff prevail.

SECOND OFFICER.

This sly intention quarters us so ill,
 In these same rascal-suburbs, that no stir
 May tend to warn the prince; whose steps are dogg'd,
 That, when for business, or a change of scene,
 He quits his home, our serpent may sneak thro'.
 In nick of time, the starving gentleman,
 Giraldo, for Gonçalves, tracks the game.

THIRD OFFICER.

To catch a simple lady unprepar'd !

SECOND OFFICER.

And scare her, if he can, (Oh, worthy him !)
Behind her champion's back, to vow a vow
Of separation,

FIRST OFFICER.

Anguish, and deceit !

I wish him no success.

THIRD OFFICER.

Trust woman's heart,
And woman's head, on such a vital point,
Gonçalves pleads in vain, altho' he turn [*mocking*]
A crocodile, to weep his country's grief.
One look upon her babes, and all is safe.
Let's toast the health of Ignez.

SECOND OFFICER.

That for Spain !

[*Snapping his fingers, as in defiance.*

But Ignez is a rare exception, Trumps !

Here's to *her* charms !

[*They drink.*

FIRST OFFICER.

If ever they be wed,

Then, to her virtues !

SECOND OFFICER.

We must guard our tongues,
Gonçalves, nor the King, should book our pledge.

THIRD OFFICER.

No, nor Giraldo, sworder, spy, in one.

FIRST OFFICER.

Or we were book'd as well, and in a page
Black as the blackest.

SECOND OFFICER.

Where Gonçalves dots
Those who are troublesome, that disappear,
And none dare search for them—

THIRD OFFICER.

And if they did,
There's none could find.

FIRST OFFICER.

I comfort me, I'm poor,
Those who were miss'd, these ten years, all were rich.

[*A party appears at a half-open door, listening.*

SECOND OFFICER.

There was the litigant whose cause was heard,
And judgment ripe to serve him.

THIRD OFFICER.

And his cause
In prejudice of great Gonçalves.

FIRST OFFICER.

So!

And yet what need, where judges may be brib'd,
And means are flush to bribe them—what the need
To spirit men away?

SECOND OFFICER.

And stop their breath?

THIRD OFFICER.

Your cowards hold, that dead men tell no tales,
So, hazard deeds of darkness.

FIRST OFFICER.

There is cause

Light should be thrown on them, from patriot-swords,
Or we, and all shall perish.

SECOND OFFICER.

Soon, or late!

Where are there leaders you and I dare trust?
Or you?

THIRD OFFICER.

Ourselves, whene'er the hour is ripe.

FIRST OFFICER.

But, how to ripen it?

THIRD OFFICER.

Leave these alone,

Who rule us, 'tis their rule shall knell the hour.

FIRST OFFICER.

The sooner were the better.

SECOND OFFICER.

Glass to glass,

Conjure its speedy advent.

THIRD OFFICER.

When it dawns,

I'm a false prophet if we do not hail

Dom Pedro on our part—

FIRST OFFICER.

He hates these knaves

Who govern us, and alienate from him,

And us, and all, our sovereign lord the King.

SECOND OFFICER.

A weak man, well-intention'd !

[*Party who has been listening, disappears.*]

THIRD OFFICER.

Sparrows, mate,
Carry you treason, unto royal ears,
Be circumspect !

SECOND OFFICER.

And wash your treason down.

[*Serving Lass enters.*]

SERVING LASS.

Two gentlemen—no doubt they style themselves !—
(Fine gentlemen to call for nothing,—No !
Tho' ordersome as customers of weight)
Have flurried me to interrupt your cups,
And bid you wait on them ; if I were ye
They'd wait on me, instead ; tho' saddle-sworn,
And feigning they're forbidden to dismount.

THIRD OFFICER.

Mayhap 'tis so.

SERVING LASS.

Mayhap they'd spare their pelf !

THIRD OFFICER.

How, if they've none to spare ?

FIRST OFFICER.

Whence come they ?

SERVING LASS.

Whence ?

Where is't your leader bides, whoe'er he be,
Your proud town-bird, that might have bode with us ?

THIRD OFFICER.

Scolding becomes our Hebe ; what a treat
Our Comrades in the dark have miss'd in thee.

SERVING LASS.

Ye are not going ? half the wine's unpour'd.

SECOND OFFICER.

Pour it thyself.

FIRST OFFICER.

And Joachim, and Dame,
Tapster, who will—Giraldo, or I err.

[*To officers.*]

THIRD OFFICER.

Your Jove must quit you—Hebe, do not die !

[*Kissing her.*]

[*They go forth, followed by the Lass.*]

SCENE IV.—*Another apartment of Iñez, in the Convent of Santa Clara—Iñez alone.*

IGNEZ.

'Tis the first time my husband leaves my gates,
That I reap joy instead of gloom, because
He leaves me—but the reason's plain and just.
He quits me, for a space, to disconcert
Manœuvres 'gainst our peace—to guard his truth
Sacred and inaccessible, till those,
Who have conspir'd to shake it, and their means,
Are utterly confounded and dispers'd.
If every wife were cherish'd as myself,
The world would be a paradise, and bliss
The lot of wedded days. My Poet's soul
Exaggerates the few poor charms of mine,
And loves me with a superhuman love.
Hush, hush, my heart—nor harbour other thoughts
Than those of humblest thankfulness, and peace.
I have sinn'd much—this tendency within
To new-found rapture shocks my conscious soul,
And puts the dead Constança in mine eyes.
She died—so I had perish'd, had her lord,
After he stray'd to fascinate my love,
(A love that words can never, never paint!)
Had this sole umpire of my earthly fate,
Cast my poor heart away—that cause of grief
Which, till the meek Constança ceas'd to mourn,
At least, was fortified from grosser sin—
Oh! name it not to fancy's merest dream,
A consummation that had driv'n me mad,
Peace, flutterer! peace! on ills that cannot hap,
Expend not anguish, and delusive fear.
Again, this sense of ecstasy! again,
My soul, my soul, restrain me, and correct:
Arm me for trials, if, one risk escap'd,
Come after *that* what may, deserve the name:
Rouse me to duties, and to him whose truth
Hath wrought salvation for me here below,
Make me a fount of happiness for aye.
Pedro, my bliss! the father of our babes,
Would we were with thee!

[*Pauses.*]

[*Gonçalves is ushered in by an attendant, who retires.*]

GONÇALVES.

Miracle of Spain!

Worthy best homage for thine own sweet sake,

IGNEZ.

What would Gonçalves here? When last receiv'd,
Pedro was by; I, then, esteem'd thee rude.

GONÇALVES.

If rude to Pedro, never rude to thee.

IGNEZ.

Rudeness to him is far more rude to me
Than rudeness to myself.

GONÇALVES.

If rude to him,
Last time, or other times, the fault is thine:
Thou art too fair to gaze on thee, nor grow
Envious, as I have been, and am.

IGNEZ.

Forbear,
You strive to do me insult.

GONÇALVES.

Fair Castile,
I journey hither on affairs of weight,
As, soon, I shall unfold.

IGNEZ.

Your purpose sped,
I must take leave; my Lord will chide my stay.
[retiring some paces.]

GONÇALVES.

I come from Pedro's Sire!

IGNEZ.

To me?

GONÇALVES.

To thee!

IGNEZ.

Wherefore to me?

GONÇALVES.

None else can better guess.

IGNEZ.

Can "better guess"—who cannot guess at all?
What would the King?

GONÇALVES.

Thou'rt thrall'd--to have thee free!

IGNEZ.

I am as free as I would wish to rove;
A fond bird, in a golden, glorious cage,
The world to me; for, here, I greet my Mate,
And, here, our Nestlings chirrup forth their joy.

If I'm secluded of my own free choice,
What is't to thee, Inquisitor? say on,
What would the King?

GONÇALVES.

A sacrifice, betimes,
To duty—public welfare—and the throne.

IGNEZ.

A sacrifice to what?

GONÇALVES.

A self-restraint
I would repay, and make the less to bear,
By offer of all service, and estate,
A worshipper of Beauty, as I am,
(Since beauty smote me first, long since, in thee)
Can lavish at thy feet.

IGNEZ.

You kneel to Pedro,
Whene'er you kneel to me; for I am, Sir,
The presence of the honour of my Lord!

GONÇALVES.

Think lightlier of it.

IGNEZ.

Pedro hears thee!

GONÇALVES.

Nay,

He is away.

IGNEZ.

He's here—for we are one!
Thou hast been warn'd—forbear me—Is thy course
For King Affonso, or thine own gross self?

GONÇALVES.

The King hath sent,

IGNEZ.

He bade thee proffer me—

GONÇALVES [*interrupting*].

Whate'er a king can do to keep thee blest,
And Independent of this fleeting passion
Which taints the wayward bosom of his heir.

IGNEZ.

Tell, Sir, the King, he knoweth not his Son.

GONÇALVES.

Heed the King's words, and lift your future lot
High o'er its now-chill sphere of chance and change.

IGNEZ.

I love where change, the Murderer, cannot come.

GONÇALVES.

We find your lover fickle.

IGNEZ.

I do not!

GONÇALVES.

Oh, beautiful in anger! brook me, still,
I will be brief to paint the scene of woe.
The wretched Monarch wrung his hands, and pray'd
You would resign to reason, and to him,
So fierce a gallant, and a son so stain'd
With disobedience, ruggedness, and pride;
So should you reap forgiveness, safety, peace,
Freedom, and, ne'er to cease, the King's reward.

IGNEZ.

I cannot spare the boon your Master craves;
I find my liege-lord gentle; if the King,
His father, find him otherwise, mayhap
The King's to blame.

GONÇALVES.

Oh! treason!

IGNEZ.

None, Sir, none!

GONÇALVES.

Tho' musical as ne'er was treason yet.

IGNEZ.

I speak him as I prove him—if, 'mongst men,
Where I am not, my cherisher were rude,
Rugged, impetuous, fierce, as you defame,
In that he tam'd his nature, to become
My ever present balm, thou sland'rous man!
See'st not, that if thy falsehood were most true,
I should have doubl'd cause to doat on one
Who, rude to others, was to me so kind?

GONÇALVES.

Arm'd at all points! we deem'd her easy prey. [*Aside.*
What, were he faithless?

IGNEZ.

I would stake their lives,
Our ever precious children's, on his truth!
He is not faithless,—but thyself art false—
He is not fickle,—but thy hopes are base—
Thou hast presum'd—for I am lone, and weak;
The King shall know thou'dst serve thy lusts, not him.

GONÇALVES.

Thou tauntest, maiden!

IGNEZ.

Matron is the name

Pedro shall teach thee.

GONÇALVES.

Minion is the

IGNEZ [*interrupting*].

Curse,

Thou would'st attain me with; thy hopes and thou
Are fit but for a Minion—I am none.

GONÇALVES.

'Twas the King's epithet.

IGNEZ.

The King's forgiv'n,
Till disabus'd; but thou, to serve thine ends,
(Unchivalrous assailer as thou art)
To call a solitary dame foul names,
That, as thou tempted'st, thou might'st sting her soul,
And bid her virtue totter through her shame;
Thou—were I black as thou would'st have me grim'd,
As false, as I am true, as void of wit,
Thou should'st not triumph, so; nor I refrain
To spurn thee, for a dastardly old man.
Hadst wooed me for a posset, or a crutch,
Thou hadst been seasonable—I, inclin'd.

GONÇALVES.

The King will part ye.

IGNEZ.

Not the King of kings!
We are fast knit for this world, and the next.

GONÇALVES.

Thou dost blaspheme.

IGNEZ.

Or thou?—in God's own ways,
Who'd thrust thy foul desires, and strive to plunge
The little virtue thou would'st yet grant mine,
Soul-deep in vice, an offering to the fiend.
He's at thy elbow, gross Ambassador!
Away, by thine allegiance to thy king!
Thou tamper'st with his kin!

GONÇALVES.

A tigress rous'd! [*Aside.*
Thine were strange kinship, concubine! and fool!
[*As Gonçalves hurries out in confusion, the Scene closes.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—GONÇALVES *alone, in an apartment of a Palace at Coimbra.*

GONÇALVES.

So, I am balk'd! the vixen is mock-chaste;
 And I too stale for such a brood of charms.
 "A dastardly old man!" tho' not so old
 But that desire had conn'd this piece of sin,
 And honour'd it too much to wish it mine.
 When she hurl'd scorn upon me—not till then,
 (How old soe'er this scoffer may presume)
 The strength of my impulsion pass'd away
 Into my pride; *that* bears no smack of age,
 As she shall feel, and tremble. Ere the King
 Shall learn I'd serve my lusts, (the sorry dolt
 To threat the King should learn) the worm must share
 The beauty she denies me! better I
 Had rioted on that proud flesh than he,
 A banqueter who founs, and yields no joy;
 But she hath dar'd; and, aping chastity,
 Meets her reward! A broken gentleman,—
 A gambler, when in luck, a tool, when not,
 One I have us'd already,—will be here,
 And, if he stead me, he shall have his price.

[GIRALDO *enters.*]

GIRALDO.

The great Gonçaves

GONÇALVES.

You shall call me *great*,
 When I have *prov'd* my greatness to lift up
 Your abject fortunes.

GIRALDO.

They are past redress.

GONÇALVES.

But such as wealth can miracle.

GIRALDO.

I know

No *miracle*.

GONÇALVES.

I do—to make you whole!
No niggard bounty, and no part-repair,
But favour, and *first* fortune—Wer't too much?

GIRALDO.

Gonçalves' aim is lofty!

GONÇALVES.

Is't not wise?

You'd reap as you shall sow?

GIRALDO.

A seed of change?

[*Significantly.*

Promotion for my patron!—who is plac'd
So high already, if he rise one step,
He'll jolt a bauble from a neighbour's brow,
And—catch it on his own.

GONÇALVES.

Oh, fie, Sir, fie!

You have some license with me, but not this
To misinterpret me a traitor, no!

GIRALDO.

Not yet!

GONÇALVES.

Not yet?

GIRALDO.

I guess'd it had been now.

GONÇALVES.

Wherefore?

GIRALDO.

You promis'd *miracles*:—thought I,
The miracles I reap I first must sow.

GONÇALVES.

Discard such wicked thoughts, or keep away,
I would not tempt your loyalty, believe me,
To war with what is sacred.

GIRALDO.

While it suits !

[*Aside.*]

GONÇALVES.

No,—but there is a sinner in our way,
 An Incubus upon our country's weal;
 One to breed Castros, and put up on high
 The spawn of proud Castile.

GIRALDO.

A woman !

GONÇALVES.

Ay,
 An alien, and our future Sovereign's bane.

GIRALDO.

I have slain men, and taken off my foes,
 I cannot slay a woman.

GONÇALVES.

Bah, a jade !

GIRALDO.

A woman, still, and not my foe ;—Not I !

GONÇALVES.

Who perilleth the state is foe of all ;
 The weakest, strongest, if its weakness prove
 Its very strength ; as, witness your dislike
 To crush this she-destroyer, tho' her course
 Tends, with infallible, and speedy aim,
 To cast your country at the feet of Spain,
 And bind us slaves to foreigners and Castros.
 You have a touch of patriotism left,
 Now, will you serve your country ?

GIRALDO.

I would serve,

Myself.

GONÇALVES.

So be it !

GIRALDO.

But I cannot smite

A woman,—and no foe.

GONÇALVES.

A woman, thou !

Is there no music in the long lost sound,
 The blissful dice, to win thee into man !
 Thou may'st be shaking fortunes in thy lap,
 So thou wilt serve thy country.

GIRALDO.

Thee !

GONÇALVES.

Thyself !

One more who needs it direly.

GIRALDO.

Saints attest !

GONÇALVES.

'Tis but an earnest.

[*Gives a Purse of Gold.*]

We have glean'd, Giraldo,

She hath a whim to pace the Convent walks,
 When Pedro is from home, and nightly watch
 Some star, the Moon itself for aught I care,
 The simpleton believes he watches too:—
 It is a sort of mirror I suppose,
 Hung up in space for her peculiar use,
 And burnish'd to reflect her Pedro's eyes;
 That is, when shining out as now it shines.
 I wonder what she signals when 'tis veil'd ?

GIRALDO.

And, yet, I recollect—but I am lost,
 My young days soon were over.

GONÇALVES.

For thy old,

Come, store thy best provision.

GIRALDO.

Not yet, *old*,I never would grow *old*.

GONÇALVES.

Why so ?

GIRALDO.

Because

My conscience which plays harpy with me, now,
 When left to solitude, or scant of cheer,
 Would then I fear, in very cheer's despite,
 Devour me wholly.

GONÇALVES.

Wine would lift thee up,

For thou art down, and here is some, the like
 You shall not drink the land through, but with me.
 'Tis my own med'cine—and, when I am chill,
 It warms me to the core.

[*Drinks.*]GIRALDO. [*drinking in turn*]

'Tis sound, 'tis good !

GONÇALVES.

Surely your cellars full might seal your peace
With conscience and old age, when'er the two
Meet in your state of man—meanwhile, for years,
Merry long years, the rattling dice are yours
To throw, and if you're tutor'd, ne'er to lose.
You need the stakes to start with—Is the wine
Worthy Gonçaves?

GIRALDO.

Let me be assur'd!

[*Drinks again.*]

I have been held best taster of my time.

GONÇALVES.

Largely to deal, the stakes must needs be large :
They shall be so—and you shall play—and grow!

GIRALDO.

Another hand might do it.

GONÇALVES.

Hush! Not one

Would I confide our secret with; and if
We trust another hand, that *other* hand
Would sweep the stakes.

GIRALDO.

It must not be; no, no!

[*to himself.*]

This wine is cordial-strong. [*drinks again*] You said, the minx
Is perilous!

GONÇALVES.

To peace, and to the throne.

[*Pausing.*]

Disguise your writing, as you've done before—

[*Pointing to table. Giraldo writes as he dictates.*]

That service was requited—trace some lines,
How, for revenge, the writer sought her blood,
Who had disgrac'd her family: few words
Are ever best—well scribbled!—sign them, C.
Done in a trembling character, as though
The rage of vengeance shook the writer's frame!
When found beside her body, they will point
To Castros and her kin, whom God confound,
As perpetrators of the deed.—

GIRALDO.

Enough!

The reptile's pois'nous? and the state alarm'd?
And I—

GONÇALVES

The sworn deliv'rer.

[*interrupting.*]

GIRALDO.

You will shield?

GONÇALVES.

Ay, and enrich.

GIRALDO.

Our secret's safe?

[going.

GONÇALVES.

Till doom.

Scale the fields' wall—the moon is frosty bright—
Just where the Cypress darken, crouch, and watch.

[As he follows Giraldo out.]

SCENE II.—IGNEZ, alone, *pacing the Garden of the Convent.*

IGNEZ.

Spirit of calmness that, with halcyon wing,
Brood'st o'er the moonlit verdure, reach my heart;
Expand its feelings, and refine its powers,
And wrap it in serenity and peace.
Persuade me that the present, tho' depriv'd
Of my poor life's sole staff, still, still, is bless'd
In that great homage to fidelity
His very absence tenders—Yes, I'm lov'd!
Persuade me that the past, with toils beset,
Augurs a happy future; by some fine,
Pervasive instinct, place me on the spot,
Where, now, beneath the stars-sown vault on high,
O'er-canopied like me, or kindly hous'd,
My husband dwells on those he leaves behind. [Looking around.
Have I grown nervous since this new design
Which drives my Pedro from me, till his Sire
Dismiss his bootless strangers? Never, yet,
These moon-illumin'd walks have shown less sweet
Than quiet safety dress'd them, as they stretch
In silvery-bright enchantment. Is it fear,
Sprung of emotions indignation fans,
That creeps and thrills me thro'?

[GIRALDO creeps forward beneath the trees, and listens intently.

O foolish King!

And thou foul Pander to thine own low lusts,
Therein a traitor to thy master, thou
Cold-hearted lump of cunning, who would'st have
Lost Ignez torn from Pedro to become
The castaway of such a wretch as thou—
Gonçalves, and thy Sov'reign, ye are foil'd!

I am my Pedro's wife, his lawful mate,
 And sit high Queen of Portugal when ye
 Are dust—may, then, your spirits find repose!
 Ye use us ill, but I will not complain,
 The King's my kin—Gonçaves most my dread.

[Looking about as if with an instinct of fear.]

Heard I a stir?—the quiv'ring of the leaves?
 Some hatching bird? some rabbit o'er the paths?
 Something oft heard at other times? then, why
 Thus restless and susceptible? why—why?
 My babes are warm aneest; the mother-bird
 Shall hie within, and pore upon their sleep,
 And bless, and pray for them, and trebly guard.
 Zenette is fond and faithful, I'll within.

[Giraldo comes from his concealment, pallid, and in excitement.]

GIRALDO.

'Tis well I listen'd ere I struck a blow,
 For blow of mine were certain. I have gain'd
 A secret, that shall work a mine of wealth,
 To which Gonçaves' *bounty* were a jest.
 He hath a huckster's soul—a man of shreds!
 As sour and sordid as—no more of *him*.
 She *looks* a Queen; and, as the moonlight play'd
 In streams around her form, she seem'd enshrin'd,
 Above her and about her, as she mov'd,
 In radiance of a Halo not of earth.
 This, and an old remembrance, she reviv'd,
 Of one I see, at times, in childhood's glass,
 (Oh, that the past could once again be mine!)
 Enchain'd both will and hand, and sav'd my soul
 The stain of regal blood—while I have won
 The Heir-Apparent's secret, which I'll use,
 To place *me* up, and pull Gonçaves down.
 What do I here, amidst a scene like this,
 Looking the Satan I was lur'd to act?
 I will begone. 'Twas hard to scale the walls,
 Grant it be less perplexing to descend.
 Who's there?

[As terrified.]

A shadow, from the Convent's lights,
 That flash'd along the sward? Yon clump shows strange.
 I shall grow haunted, tho' the crime's not wrought.
 Courage, Giraldo, and sure footing—so!
 I'm freighted with a treasure—what gives way?

[As he climbs over the top of the wall, he suddenly shrieks, and falls headlong out of sight.]

[*The SUPERIOR of the CONVENT and a NUN enter from the other side of the garden*]

NUN.

St. Diniz! 'twas a cry?

SUPERIOR.

The Portal's clos'd;
And lights, from yonder Oriol, glancing down,
Betray the lady Ignez at her prayers.
We shall not be forgotten.

NUN.

Tho' her lord
Claim her first intercession.

SUPERIOR.

And her last;
Her babes, and friends, well wrestled for, between.

NUN.

The cry was not renew'd? at first, I fear'd
'Twas her's, but she is hous'd: perchance, we're mock'd?

SUPERIOR.

I heard it faintly; from amidst the yews,
The sound broke, indistinctly, on my ear.

NUN.

Then, 'twas some fox, amid the feather'd tribes;
Or owl which hooted hoarsely; or, beyond,
Over the walls, amid the open ways,
Some noise that nought concerns us.

SUPERIOR.

List, again—
I heard it only once—and I begin
To count it some night-echo.

NUN.

Nothing more!
She hath passed in.

SUPERIOR.

We'll seek her, and be sure.

[*Scene closes.*]

SCENE III.—*The closet of Gonçalves. Gonçalves enters soliloquizing.*

GONÇALVES.

Balk'd in my love, and foil'd in my revenge!
My bravo crippled, to fall worse, and wish

His bosom clean, and summon some strange priest,
 Whom *I* know not, but who will, then, know *me* !
 His fellow, on the watch when he pitch'd down,
 Who brought me this account, will soon be back
 To tend his pains, and keep intruders thence.
 My bargain with Giraldo was, that he
 Should venture by himself; it seems the sneak
 (Thro' want of fitting courage I divine)
 From first betray'd his purpose to this rogue
 Who, sent t' apprise me of the hap, at once
 Suspects me for the cause! 'Tis dang'rous ground—
 I've paid him handsomely to bar the doors,
 And tend the wounded man; nor stir abroad,
 But keep his post and earn a larger meed.
 Rare luck hath laid Giraldo on his bed,
 Sole-aided by this comrade, ere his case
 Had rous'd the Convent, or alarm'd the Streets.
 I must have eye on them, and should he crave
 A leech in matters pious, then, why, then,
 He shall do shrift to me—it would not rank
 My first disguise—(enough!)—this class of tool
 I dare not try again; for aught appears,
 The Convent may be warn'd, and on th' alert.
 Now, for a bolder flight to clutch my prey;
 Statecraft shall aid me, and the King shall fear
 The Harlot's fatal; and the Prince abus'd;
 A snake of Spain becoil'd around the throne;
 And his own *precious* life, his grandson's, too,
 Fernando, dead Constança's only child;
 At mercy of its fangs—God help her scorn!
 She might have purchas'd peace, and found my "*age*"
 More comfortable far than that rash love
 I will defy to shield her—they'll be here,
 My colleagues whom I sway; for I have means,
 And they are weak, and vicious; and the King
 Penurious; so, by bounties well bestow'd,
 I am three-voic'd in council—rule the King—
 And—the old dullard sees it not—repay,
 Out of *his* purse, the price that builds *my* power.
 So much for penury which lacketh wit,
 To save *one* piece, it dissipates a *score*.
 I can be close, none closer, where the soil
 Is barren; but, where fertile, he's insane
 Who doth grudge seed—tho' gold—that brings increase.
 Pacheco, I must wheedle: Coelho
 Is ready form'd by nature, not to lead,

But to rush on wherever he is led.
 'Tis to be King, without his risks and cares,
 To pull the strings your puppet must obey:
 Now, it shall smite this Ignez, who hath struck,
 Thro' its heart's core, the plum'd Gonçalves' pride.
 "The dastardly old man!" young, young enough
 To feel her beauty's spell, and, now, destroy.

[COELHO and PACHECO enter.]

I have been waiting.

[*Somewhat roughly.*]

COELHO.

We are out of breath,

Behold!

GONÇALVES.

Ye should be—I am full of that
 Which chafes to be imparted—we must join,
 To work without a flaw—Pacheco sees,
 And Coelho, how deeply France resents
 This terrible rebuff; we, we were wrong
 To humour, to that head, our master's whim,
 And treat with France, ere Pedro was secur'd.
 Upon the King's entreaty, since we met,
 The ambassage, reluctantly, complied
 To wait upon the *frontier*!—Mark, not they
 Within our festive city—till the King
 Hath commun'd with his heir: so far, they yield.
 They will not dally long, and we must *act*!
 At the King's instance, I have seen

COELHO.

The Prince?

[*Interrupting.*]

GONÇALVES.

The Prince, in her who fascinates the Prince,
 But not the Prince in person—tho' he stole
 From Court to home, he stole away again,
 And none will hint us whither:—we must *act*.

COELHO.

What said his mistress?

GONÇALVES.

Had she been his wife,
 Ay, or his Queen, she could not have assum'd
 More haughtiness; I would ye had been there.
 The King, myself, and ye, were all condemn'd!
 I urg'd, as from the council—from the throne—
 For peace—the people—every thing was spurn'd.

PACHECO.

What were your offers ?

GONÇALVES.

Honours, wealth, repose,
Rights for her children in her *native* land,
Our King's, our Nation's gratitude, if she
Would fly from Pedro, and return to Spain.

PACHECO.

What is't you fear ?

COELHO.

The insult dealt to France.

GONÇALVES.

Give me your heed—I fear not France, but Spain !
The King is strick'n in years, and should his heir,
Some day of weakness, and—be warn'd !—each hour
Is likelier than the last to bring that day,
Should he betroth his mistress, where were ye—
Dom Pedro on the throne—this Iñez, Queen—
Castile in favour—and the Castros' swarms
Nurs'd in the sun ?

COELHO.

We, we who curb'd the heir,
And spurn'd the Castros ?

GONÇALVES.

Say, Pacheco, say ?

PACHECO.

In exile, or in chains.

GONÇALVES.

If not, deep down
Where some should be unless we'd fill *their* graves.

PACHECO.

The danger is not pressing.

GONÇALVES.

With your leave,
All harm that *may* be presseth in such sort,
A wise man puts it in the catalogue
Of things that may not be ; then, sleeps secure,
Nor starts from ill repose to find, it is !
That shock he leaves to fools.

COELHO.

Pacheco, hear !

We must make time our certain, safe ally,
Or time will trip our heels.

PACHECO.

What would ye?

GONÇALVES.

These;

Safety, and place, and power intangible,
 All that we are, and more, as we shall grow,
 Thro' our own guidance and address, most great.
 Surely the snug Triumvirate we are,
 Who hold the kindling present in our grasp,
 Therein may shape the future?

COELHO.

It is ours!

GONÇALVES.

So we lack not decision, and the tact
 To bid decision thrive.

COELHO.

In acts, not words.

[*To Pacheco.*]

PACHECO.

I hate the Castros, and than they should rise
 To put their proud feet on my prostrate neck,
 I'd rather—

GONÇALVES.

What?

PACHECO.

I know not what.

GONÇALVES.

I'll guess—

Strike at the cause which gives the Castros power.

PACHECO.

The King?

[*with alarm.*]

GONÇALVES.

Small need—for I and ye are King,
 The moving power thro' which a weak man's strong
 To act, and seem supreme.

PACHECO.

You would not slay

His heir?

GONÇALVES.

Tho' he were, solely, in thy path
 Betwixt thee and a Princedom?

PACHECO.

He is not.

GONÇALVES.

Were he ?

COELHO.

I'd slay my Sire.

GONÇALVES.

You, you are not

Pacheco.

PACHECO.

And no Princedom's at our beck
To have by evil doing.

COELHO.

Evil thought,

To brand it evil doing !

GONÇALVES.

I'm a man

To give and take best reasons why we act ;
And honor our Pacheco he is slow
To vote, before he ponder on the cost.

PACHECO.

But, why the heir ?

COELHO.

Why not ?

GONÇALVES.

Good parricide,

My scope is not Dom Pedro, but the cause
Which turns Dom Pedro alien—Cunning men
Limit their physic to the needs they cure.
Dom Pedro's time *may* come, if ye and I,
Whene'er he ripen to his sire's command,
Find him intractable ; Pacheco, then,
Would have a cause, and I—

COELHO.

We surely shall.

GONÇALVES.

More surely so, this Ignez by his side,
And her whole brood of Castros, young and old ;
Those of her womb stamp'd legal, to become
A nest of scorpions, with the mother-vice
To love Castile, and carve her Spaniard's sway.

COELHO.

Ignez is doom'd ?

GONÇALVES.

Pacheco's voice is mute.

PACHECO.

My vote attends the King's.

GONÇALVES.

We, we are King.

I prov'd before, wilt have me prove anew?

PACHECO.

Are ye convinc'd?

COELHO.

There never will be peace

While Ignez is alive.

GONÇALVES.

Our *frontier*-guests,

Whose half concession stands, as 'twere, at pause

Betwixt or peace or war, if Ignez live,

Will have a cause of strife which we shall rue.

PACHECO.

We'll to the King.

GONÇALVES.

United and resolv'd?

COELHO.

Or, not at all!

PACHECO.

Ye lead me.

GONÇALVES.

Be thou led.

[*They go forth—the scene closes.*]

SCENE IV.—IGNEZ *enters from her Bed Chamber to its Anteroom.*

IGNEZ.

They sleep, and angels guard them. Poor Zenette

[*Looking back.*]

Struggled to keep me company. 'Tis best

She fail'd, and slumbers. I would be alone.

If I but knew my Pedro slept, and where,

I might sleep too; but doubting keeps my eyes

Proof against present rest, and yonder Moon,

The which the garden's chill mysterious air

Drove me from commune with in open night,

Companions me the best, and feeds my thoughts

To hope my Pedro watches it like me.

[*Gazing through Casement on it.*]

Now, if he do, he calls upon my name,

As I on his, and, in the conscious air,

Pedro and Ignez meet; each utter'd voice
 Sent up, as incense, toward yon shining orb,
 To mingle aspirations, and shed down
 Blessings reciprocal. Oh, Pedro, Life!
 Heaven multiply its bounties on thy head,
 Restore thee soon to Ignez, and thy home,
 And these, our tender plants, that crave thy care.

[*Pauses, again gazing through Casement.*

They stir! Perchance, Zenetta may awake,
 She doz'd against her will; I'll peep and learn.

[*Looking into room.*

All's still again. Again, I'm free to muse,
 And walk with Contemplation, as I'm fain.
 It soothes my restlessness, and well provides,
 In solitude, the company I crave.
 There are two sorts of love; and both are mine,
 At once—O bliss beyond the common grasp!
 One, the mysterious instinct that attracts,
 Often at sight, two sympathetic souls,
 And makes them only precious each to each,
 And, as 'twere dead, to all the world beside.
 A worship of the spirit, rather than
 The flesh in which 'tis shrin'd—a reverence
 Angels may feel for angels, as they do,
 And taste of happiness and extacy.
 The other is Affection; born of proof;
 Possession; interchange of kindest deeds;
 Caressings, tendernesses, mingled tears;
 Self-sacrifices for one's other self;
 Anxiety to cherish; dread to lose!
 My love for Pedro was my first love—His
 For me so like it, I would pledge my peace,
 Tho' he were wed—he never lov'd before;
 Never—no tarnish'd passion, second hand,
 Could wrap its object as my love wraps me
 In one clear atmosphere of perfect bliss.
 Perfect, when he is with us! when away
 Prov'd by its sole sad contrast, as 'tis now,
 So perfect, it is all our heart desires.

[*Zenetta enters from the chamber.*]

ZENETTA.

O dearest lady, I conceiv'd you lost,
 And all my little charges.

IGNEZ.

Fast asleep!

[*Pointing.*

ZENETTA.

Thank Mercy ! but I dreamt you all were lost,
And I was weeping sorely.

IGNEZ.

Would you weep
If Ignez and her babes —

ZENETTA.

The thought's enough !
Oh, gentle mistress, can you doubt, Zenette
Would never cease to weep if it were true ?

[*Weeps.*

IGNEZ.

Courage, my comforter ! for it is sweet
To feel your mistress is belov'd—most sweet.

[*Much affected.*

My Pedro loves me—we are man and wife—
His love were all sufficient, though the world
Hated me wholly—that it does not, comes
Not as my life's necessity, but so
As to be very grateful to my heart,
Which, my Zenette, was form'd for loving thoughts,
And holds you dearly to it—To your couch ;
You will not dream again ; and dreams are air !
I will rejoin you shortly.

ZENETTA.

Stay, within !
I dare not by myself ; and it is time
Yourself should take repose, or, vigils-spent,
You will fall ill—come, see the babes asleep,
And nestle to them.

IGNEZ.

For an empty dream !

ZENETTA.

Empty, I trust—but Pedro, he will scold
Your poor Zenette, unless she rais'd her voice,
And urg'd you to partake your needful balm.

IGNEZ.

Well, be it so—I see your silly fears
Will rob you of your sleep, unless I'm near.
Farewell, bright orb and centre-point whereto
Our eyes, in simultaneous sweet appeal,
Look up, convergent, and with fancy's aid,
Pinion'd by love, can see, and can be seen,
Each by the other ; may my Pedro's lips
Now, as I speak it, bid thee, too, farewell !
Farewell, until to-morrow night, farewell !

[*They go in.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—GIRALDO, *in his under garments, coarsely pillowed up, on a truckle bedstead—his faded mantle and sword on a stool by its side.—A table, with a vessel or two, for medicinal, and other drinks, and nutriments, on it. The SERVING MAN, who succoured him on the night of the ball, in attendance.*

GIRALDO.

I am more calm ! good fellow, what hath pass'd ?
Where am I ?

SERVING MAN.

In your lodging, on your bed.

GIRALDO.

There hath been darkness somewhere ; I was lost ;
And, then, my head reel'd painfully—Ha ! now,
I recollect a fall—a blow—a flash
Thro' eyes and brain—and nothing more for days.

SERVING MAN.

Not days, but many hours.

GIRALDO.

Unnoted days,
Till that most painful reeling back to sense,
And dread and weakness with it.

SERVING MAN.

Quench the heat
Which burns throughout your frame ; Gonçalves sends
Some cooling potion.

GIRALDO.

I will none from *him* !

SERVING MAN.

Why ?

GIRALDO.

Why? [*With a stare.*]

I will not.—As a fellow-man

Who pitied, and dost pity me, Oh, swear,
 If I, again, should lose my senses, thou
 Wilt harbour nothing that Gonçalves sends;
 Throw't to the dogs; nor proffer it, nor taste.
 If he send coin, 'tis right.

SERVING MAN.

He hath.

GIRALDO.

He ought;

It was his duty—buy whate'er we need;
 I trust you; you were kind to me, when I
 Was outcast and repuls'd; I trust you, Man!
 But trust not you Gonçalves—swear!

SERVING MAN.

I swear.

GIRALDO.

Oh, for a drink to quench this burning plague,
 And dissipate these sinkings.

SERVING MAN.

Try your own,
 Our country's simple potion which *I* mix'd.

GIRALDO.

Where's that Gonçalves sent?

SERVING MAN.

Canst see?

[*Showing it to him.*]

GIRALDO.

No more?

SERVING MAN.

This is the whole.

GIRALDO.

The whole into the street!

Now, pledge me in the draught yourself prepar'd,
 And I will follow.

[SERVING MAN *drinks first, and GIRALDO, eagerly, after him.*]

How it cools my throat,
 And adds a grateful sense of strength infus'd! [*Pauses.*]
 Never was wine elixir like to this;
 Its acid and its sweet are worth the world.

I am a wicked man, and vile to you
 Who wrought me genuine kindness, when the rest
 Were false and insolent : the aid I claim'd
 When I o'erclimb'd yon fatal Convent wall,
 Thank Providence it hath not cost your life.
 Ask me not now—I climb'd to work a crime ;
 It was no love-freak as I lied to sham,
 But ghastly hideous crime.

[*A knock at the door.*]

Who summon there ? [*In terror.*

[GONÇALVES enters, disguised as a confessor.]

GONÇALVES.

My children, Benedicite ; deep peace
 Brood o'er this sick man's couch, and in his heart.
 We, who reach every thing that passes, learn'd
 From one of our prompt brotherhood at hand,
 A wounded man, supported by his friend,
 Was carried o'er this threshold : him we seek,
 To comfort him in mind, and, if his want
 Be meat, or drink, or med'cine, to provide.

GIRALDO.

Most worthy father !

SERVING MAN.

Those are well supplied.

GONÇALVES.

By whom ?

SERVING MAN.

I am forbidden.

GONÇALVES.

Not to me,

Whose memory is the hiding-place wherein
 The troubled lodge their burdens, and are safe.
 You would confess your sins ? not trust me, youth ?
 What ! hide so small a matter from mine ear ?
 Who is't supplies his wants ?

SERVING MAN.

Good priest, I'm sworn.

GONÇALVES.

There is a cause !

[*Accusingly.*

I—I can loose your oath.

SERVING MAN.

Comfort our sufferer : spare my oath uncrush'd.

[SERVING MAN draws away from GONÇALVES.]

GONÇALVES.

The fellow's staunch; my mind is more at ease;
 He shall be further sworn; he heeds his oaths. [Aside.
 If they who hire, or pay thee for thy pains, *[to Serving Man.*
 Fail, or become remiss, rely on me:
 I shall come daily; I will pay you, too;
 So, keep your post—see no one—tend your charge—
 Your patient is a gentleman—take heed!
 Hath our dear brother wander'd, or discours'd
 Of his past errors, when his senses stray'd?

SERVING MAN.

His errors, father, he hath kept for thee.
 I am a new acquaintance, poor, and plac'd
 To tend his cure; his secrets are not mine.

GONÇALVES.

No crime, or error, hath escap'd his lips?

SERVING MAN.

He hath but just recover'd use of speech,
 Nor told his sins.

GONÇALVES.

Heaven grant they're few to own.
 Retire till call'd; the floors below will serve;
 Leave not the house; recruit thyself, and wait.
[Gives money to the Man, who retires.
 Art sleeping, brother?

GIRALDO.

No; my eyes were clos'd,
 That I might better see the load within.
 Light pains my eyes—my brain—and, with the pain,
 Confuseth mem'ries—purposes—

GONÇALVES.

Be calm'd—

You spoke of purposes; I trust they tend
 To place before me every phase of sin
 Since shrift absolv'd you last? To spare your pain,
 And waste of precious breath, remember, son,
 "Once shriv'd, for ever shriv'd"—those sins, alone,
 Confess me which were ne'er before confess'd:
 Which have been interceded for, dismiss,
 Irk not your conscience with them; but begin
 With that, the very last, whate'er it be,
 Your grief would fain repent.

GIRALDO.

My latest Sin,
 Was but premeditated, not perform'd.

GONÇALVES.

Wherefore ?

GIRALDO.

Some unseen influence chain'd my will.

GONÇALVES.

Ha !—but the sin you meditated ?

GIRALDO.

Was—

A murder—in cold blood—

[*a pause.*
whisperingly.

GONÇALVES.

Of whom ? of whom ?

GIRALDO.

A woman, and a princess.

GONÇALVES.

Princess ? whom ?

GIRALDO.

The Castro, who is Pedro's lawful wife,
And future queen of Lusitania's realm.

Well may'st thou start amazedly ; the world

Believe her Pedro's mistress ; I have heard

From her own lips,

[GONÇALVES *starts up.*

GONÇALVES.

Had'st converse with her ?

GIRALDO.

No :

But catching her clear voice, behind the trees,

Where I lay wait, and dogg'd her, some good Power

Forc'd me to listen, and I heard,

GONÇALVES.

On, on !

GIRALDO.

Why such emotion ? You would to the King,

And rob me of my secret, and reward !

[*Straining eagerly forward, then sinking back with excitement.*

GONÇALVES.

I wait to shrieve you—if your secret's told,

You shall be paid—(in coin you least expect)—

[*Aside.*

This mood is not of penitence, my son ;

Look to your state ; your wants shall be supplied ;—

Should late recovery dawn,

GIRALDO.

Support me—so—

I feel it will not—I was wrong to dwell

On gain, or gold—my penitence shall be

To break for you my own confession's seal,
 And charge you, as you love your life, Sir Priest,
 To reach the King, and warn him that his heir
 Is lawful husband of a lawful wife,
 And she, Gonçalves hir'd me to despatch,
 (I wonder not you startle at the shock)
 Will one day sit on Lusitania's throne.

GONÇALVES.

That was her boast?

GIRALDO.

Her words were words of fire.
 "O King, and base Gonçalves"—base indeed,
 Who lur'd me to this murder—"ye are foil'd.
 I am Dom Pedro's wife, his lawful mate,
 And reign high Queen of Portugal when ye
 Are dust!"

GONÇALVES.

The Traitress!

GIRALDO.

Priest!

GONÇALVES.

No Priest, vile clod!

But that Gonçalves, thou, and this false minx,
 Have dar'd— [GIRALDO looks stupified with consternation.

I come to kill thee with my curse,
 And send thy craven soul, which nigh had dragg'd
 Gonçalves from his height, unshriven hence.
 Choke, ere thy breath attain another ear,
 Die, and be carrion—hireling! dastard! fool!

[GIRALDO shrieks and falls back, clasping his hands over
 his face. A dead silence ensues. After a short space,
 GONÇALVES, glaring on him like a beast of prey, eager,
 yet afraid to spring, cautiously draws closer to ascer-
 tain if GIRALDO be dead.

Still breathing? would some offcast like himself
 Were close at hand to hurl my danger home.
 I have not courage to lay hold, and feel
 My secret safely throttling in his throat.
 The man below's too honest! Ha! he moves.

[GIRALDO struggles up on one arm—pauses to recover breath
 —and then, slowly and solemnly, in broken fragments,
 proceeds. GONÇALVES recoils several paces.

GIRALDO.

Mock Priest—Gonçalves—thou art not my judge!
 The archfiend glares thro' thy un pitying eyes.

A light hath broken on me—good for thee,
 If it succeed—to cast the demon forth.
 Tho' man—thyself—would hurl me to despair,
 And seem'd—some hideous moments—to prevail;
 I have look'd up on high—a poor lost wretch—
 A sinner of the deepest, darkest stains,
 I have not been rejected—man is weak,
 The great Ordainer strong—nay, fear not me,
 If I grow ghastly—in the pangs of death;
 Rather the unclean spirit in thy breast
 Fear—and exorcise—ere it win thy soul.
 I shall not harm thee—tho' my deadliest foe.

[*A pause, during which he makes strange motions as if perceiving invisible beings.*]

I see—the thief in Paradise—a cross
 Held out—to me—and, lo, my mother's form—
 Yon saint I lost in childhood—she whose loss
 Cast me—a prey—to Men whom God redeem—
 She looks a look of pity—love—and hope—
 Gonçalves would have cast me—to the pit:—
 The Friend of sinners—hears me:—I grow dim—
 Go to the King, advise him they are one, [Hurriedly.
 Abjure thy purpose—nurture wrong no more—
 And, as I would be pardon'd—from my soul—
 Gonçalves—where art thou?—I pardon—thee. [Dies

[GONÇALVES pulls his cowl over his features.

GONÇALVES.

He's dead? [In an audible whisper, as if afraid to speak out.
 My nerves are shiv'ring at the thought.
 Is he quite safe? I'm sick and chill at heart,
 And my knees knock as ne'er they knock'd before.
 The corpse will rise again if I go near,
 Yet I would know he's dead— [Stretching forward.

As dead he is!

I kill'd him, but the wretch must not kill me.
 Ho, fellow, to your comrade!

[SERVING MAN re-enters.]

Yon frail clay

Is tenantless; his passing was in peace.
 He told you nothing?

SERVING MAN.

Nothing,

[GONÇALVES, as if encouraged by the presence of a second party, approaches the dead body for an instant or two.

But a crime [Aside.

Unperpetrated, which, in truth, is naught.

GONÇALVES.

I'll cite another Priest; till then, watch there;
 He shall bring orders, and the needful means
 To aid you in the proper, decent rites.
 When your dead 's buried, you shall have reward.

[*Motioning him to sit by the corpse.*

Fate multiplies the reasons she must die— [Aside.

Nor King, nor colleagues, must be disabus'd,
 For King and colleagues have been wrought to doom
 The Heir Apparent's *Mistress*—not his *Wife*—

[*Gonçalves goes forth.*

SCENE II.—*Night. One of the Gates of Coimbra. The Spanish Cavalier comes thro' the Gate and looks to the distance.*

CAVALIER.

They keep their covert snugly.

[*Cavalier winds a hunting horn in a musical under-note.*

Here he comes,

Growing distinct, amid the darkness round,
 As he draws near; my page in whom I trust,—
 I ought, for his deserts—the Prince trusts me,
 He may; my sister Ignez is a link,
 Angelical, to bind us each to each.

[*A Page, in riding accoutrements, enters.*

Things darken, Gomez! these unto the Prince,
 With best despatch;—you mounted those I bade?

PAGE.

Dias, and three beside—well arm'd, and hors'd
 To leave the King's expresses, should they race
 The road we go, a league an hour, behind.

CAVALIER.

You have not been observ'd?

PAGE.

By none; we crept
 By stealth, and singly, to yon spot you nam'd.

CAVALIER.

Ride for the forest-haunts, beyond the hills
 Where Bragelone's domains sweep far and wide.
 Save to breathe man or horse, or (saddle-fast)
 To snatch a draught to back ye, pull not rein,
 Till these are safely in the Prince's hand;
 Then, you may find your feet. Your patron, Boy,
 Holds you a faithful and a daring youth:

Ride for your life, the swifter you arrive,
The Prince shall more esteem you ; so shall I

PAGE.

The gallop is an ecstasy, and praise,
From those I love, a meed I'd die to earn.

CAVALIER.

Ride carefully the while ; your steeds are sure,
Use judgment not to push them past their speed.

[Page goes out rapidly.]

"The gallop is an ecstasy," I would
The matter for the gallop were the same.
The moment that Gonçalves reach'd the town,
So sudden-swift, as tho' he were in chase
Of Pedro who had fled the siege at Court,
I lik'd it not ; but, still, did ne'er suspect
He sought another than the truant heir.
My sister's tears betray'd—the King had stoop'd,
And he, his Minister in chief, Gonçalves ;
He had consented to be mouthpiece, *he*,
To ask a harmless Lady—shame to both !—
To tear her heart's affections from her breast,
And stamp her children fatherless :—I said
To ask—To bribe ! to threaten ! to ensnare !

[Listens in the direction taken by the Page.]

The wind is with them, so, the silent night,
Scarce rings their clatt'ring tramp upon my ear.
It weakens, every second—now, 'tis hush'd.

*[Two spies steal through the gate, and, at a distance,
watch the Cavalier's motions.]*

Coelho and Pacheco next appear'd :
The King hath, since, arriv'd ; and, neighbour'd near
At Montë Mayor, helps the artful game.
I warn'd the good Archbishop and the Queen,
(Who, tho' the rank of Ignez be conceal'd,
Treat her humanely for the children's sake)
To hold in check the King—but he, too, comes,
As I have learn'd since noon ! I greatly err,
Or Queen and Bishop will pursue his steps,
Which indicate a something strangely meant.
Surely Gonçalves would not urge the King
To seize her, in the absence of the Prince,
And force her, and her infants, weeping, hence ?—
Who knows, but dragg'd on board some ready barge,
They may design to waft them towards the sea,
To freight some galley with them back to Spain ?

[Muses.]

Unless some desperado-scheme's afoot,
 Why rush'd the King within his Creature's call?
 Oh, would the Prince had never left his roof,
 To shun a danger which his absence shapes
 Into another danger still more dire.
 I am alone—the Prince foresaw no ill—
 Not half a dozen swords can I command,
 Now Dias and his comrades are express'd.
 Still, ere the minions of the Court succeed
 (If they attempt, which much I fear they may)
 To rob Dom Pedro of his lawful wife,
 I will proclaim her such—alarm the Town—
 And, if I stand alone, will draw, and strike
 For Pedro's fortunes, and my sister's rights.
 I will return, and note—things are not ripe;
 Let's hope the Prince will reach us ere they be.
 Pedro and Ignez are, alas, to blame;
 They have done wrong to hide their marriage-state.
 I, too, was wrong in my mistaken view,
 Failing to summon Pedro to the spot,
 The moment that Gonçalves first arriv'd.

[*Goes in, followed, at a distance, by the Spies.*]

SCENE III.—*Apartments of the SUPERIOR in the Convent of Santa Clara. IGNEZ in agitation, with the SUPERIOR. IGNEZ looks about wildly, only, by fits and starts, attending to*
 SUPERIOR.

SUPERIOR.

Take heart, my child! compose your flutter'd thoughts.
 It was no vision, but a harmless dream
 Which you shall ease your breast, when you are calm'd,
 To tell me, as myself have told the like,
 When I was young as you.

IGNEZ.

The children sleep?

I did not leave them till their little cries
 Had pass'd away.

SUPERIOR.

Zenette is by their side,
 And they are warm in slumbers.

IGNEZ.

What's the hour?

SUPERIOR.

Verging on midnight. You retir'd to rest
 Earlier than you're accusom'd: 'Tis not so,

When Pedro's in your home; and I would say,
Love, pining for love's absence, rack'd your brain
With these crude frights and fantasies.—No more!
It was no vision, but the casual birth
Of restless hours, and yearnings for your Lord.

IGNEZ.

I see it, still.

SUPERIOR.

Then, yield the whole a tongue :
Speak it; and this impression, now so keen,
Will wane as you unburthen it.

IGNEZ.

I quail,

It is so awful—Mother, I did wrong
To rouse you at this hour?

SUPERIOR.

My child did right
To fly for consolation, when her need
Assail'd her; and to one,—howe'er so weak
To act good precepts,—to console her, strong.

[*The outer bell of the Convent is rung.* IGNEZ and SUPERIOR both listen in different attitudes of alarm.

IGNEZ.

What can this bode? thyself dost look alarm'd.

SUPERIOR.

Surpris'd, my Ignez!—do not deem—"alarm'd."
Who ring, are friends: I hear the gate unbarr'd.

IGNEZ.

But who, at such a season?

SUPERIOR.

Should it be

Thy Pedro to surprise thee!

IGNEZ.

Would it were,

To hear, and to interpret—'tis not he!
He is too careful of his tender plant,—
For such he doats to call me—to resort
To unadvis'd surprises, which might try,
Even with joy, Love's Sensitiveness—No,
It is not he to shield me.

SUPERIOR.

Still, this dream!

But, steps are on the stairways!

[*IGNEZ draws nearer to Superior.*

[*The QUEEN BEATRIZ, and the ARCHBISHOP OF BRAGA, are ushered in by two Nuns who retire.*]

ARCHBISHOP.

Health and peace !

God's blessing, and our benediction, rest
On Santa Clara's sisterhood, and, first,
On her, our pattern here, who tends the fold.
The Lady Ignez, too, is in our prayers,
Who note her qualities, and Pedro's truth.

QUEEN.

All state and ceremony laid aside,
We crave advice, regardless of the hour ;
Since that we would unravel brooks no pause,
Though new to us but some few hours ago.
We would be private : while our gentle friend,
So late at her devotions, seeks her rest.

ARCHBISHOP.

It is of Ignez !

[*Aside to Superior.*]

SUPERIOR.

Ha ! then ye should learn
What brings her hither—[*aside.*] with your honour'd leaves,
I read her prayer ; permit our child to stay.
She hath been rous'd from sleep by some such dream—
Vision she counts it—as we all have dream'd
Who reach the years of care ; and I am fain,
(To ease her mind before she doth return
To seek her pillow whence she just hath fled)
Our sufferer should collect her scatter'd thoughts,
And, strengthen'd by your presence and regard,
Show us her vision, I should say, her dream,
And, so, allay her terrors.

QUEEN.

I like not

This dreaming, with the facts which we have glean'd [*Aside.*]

SUPERIOR

The Lady Ignez will control her fears,
And give us their phantasmas.

IGNEZ.

If I can !

[*After a pause.*]

O royal Dame, and you, most reverend Sir,
Forgive me if I tremble as I tell.
I thought I stood within our Minster's porch,
How I reach'd there appear'd not, and, awhile,
I was alone, and shiv'ring 'mid the gloom.

I felt the chill, as still I feel it, here,
 Creep through my being; while a horror weigh'd
 Both on my brain and heart: I strove to cry
 For help, but could not; instantly, it seem'd
 The vacancy took shapes—Before me, loom'd
 Into the palpable, a sumptuous sweep
 Of purple Canopies, pavilion'd round
 Some thronal shrine they curtain'd from the sight.
 Upon them were emblazon'd Lucia's arms,
 Quarter'd with proud Castile's. Oh, give me breath,
 The horror is not yet! Around the walls
 Hung banners, atchments, trophies, ne'er yet seen
 Within their sacred precincts; and the whole
 Gleam'd 'midst unnumber'd lights that, tier by tier,
 Like stars at latest ev'ning, broke to view.
 As the full blaze shone out in dazzling trim,
 O'er Santa Clara, thro' the void of space,
 A pond'rous passing-bell was heard to toll;
 I heard it, as I hear my own words, now.
 Still I was lone—aghast and thrill'd with dread,
 Mad to retreat, yet spell-bound to remain,
 When, suddenly reveal'd, a dismal train,
 Scaring the solitude, pac'd slowly by,
 Their leader muffled like the band he led.
 Oh! what a shudd'ring seiz'd me as he pass'd,
 Scarce less than when—but that is yet to come.
 They peopled all th' interior! Nave and aisles,
 Chancel, and stall, and loft; confessionals,
 And private chapelries, o'erswarm'd with life,
 Human, funereal-clad, but deathlike mute.

SUPERIOR.

Have you ne'er conn'd, to comfort you, my child,
 Our ancient saying—"dream of dole and death;
 Wake, and reap new-found joy?"

IGNEZ.

Hush, hush, I dim

The order of the vision.

ARCHBISHOP.

Pause, and try

A draught from faith's clear fountain.

QUEEN.

By my crown,

relish not this order of her dream,
 Its ominous precision.

[*Aside.*

ARCHBISHOP.

Strangely tim'd

With our unusual advent, and the cause
Enough disclos'd to tax these midnight hours.

IGNEZ.

Where left I off?

SUPERIOR.

The Minster was alive
With mourning crowds who, hush'd in awful state,
'Tended some sov'reign obsequy.

IGNEZ.

'Tis chang'd!

To drown the night-wail of the passing-bell,
The mighty Organ burst upon mine ear
In coronation anthems; and, behold,
As by enchantment, at the pealing sounds,
High jubilant, which shook the vaulted roofs,
Thro' the vast throng the muffling garments chang'd
To festal robes; the lights blaz'd trebly bright;
And—while my breath grew thicker, and my heart
Sicken'd with palpitations of alarm—
The Canopies drew up! a general shout,
Which rock'd the Minster's structure (so I deem'd)
And, thro' my reeling senses, check'd my sight,
Hail'd a dim Female figure on a throne;
A Male, the leader of the mourning train,
At her left hand, beneath her; with his head
Averted from his Mate; a mist, or veil,
Hung o'er her features; her tiara's gems,
Her regal robes, the sceptre in her hand,
Grown visible and glorious to the gaze.
But, now, the horror comes! With one acclaim,
When the rapt congregation rent the air,
Symphonious with the Organ's thund'ring roll,
And nam'd her—"Queen of Lusitania's realm,"
At their all-hails, the mist dissolv'd, and lo,
(Thrice horrible to dream, no less, to paint)
I saw, as you do see me where I stand—

[stopping short.]

QUEEN.

Whom? What?

ARCHBISHOP.

Speak, speak!

SUPERIOR.

My child, my Igniez, sweet!

Look not so wildly.

ARCHBISHOP.

Is she stricken dumb?

QUEEN.

Whom saw'st thou? What?

ARCHBISHOP.

If, Lady, we may ask.

IGNEZ.

Myself! That worshipp'd Queen, your Ignez here!
Your Ignez here, o'ersensitive with life,
Saw, in her dream, herself enthron'd a Queen,
Insensible, as alabaster cold,
As rigid, meaningless, and ghastly pale.
There, on that chair of state, superbly plac'd,
Sole orb and centre of the gorgeous scene,
I was saluted, hymn'd, anointed, crown'd,
Proclaim'd of all, and ne'ertheless—a corpse.
See, see, again, my spectre, where I sit!
Hide, hide me, save me!

SUPERIOR.

Sister be compos'd.

ARCHBISHOP.

'Tis but illusion.

QUEEN.

Ignez, we are by,

SUPERIOR.

To comfort and protect you.

IGNEZ.

'Twas my dream,

That was reality.

SUPERIOR.

Till lost in space.

IGNEZ.

O friends, the throng by that white Mystery pass'd,
Statesmen, and warriors, beauties, old and young,
And paid the dead their homage; each, in turn,
Kissing the hem of its enthronement's shroud,
(The costliest shroud that ever mortal wore)
Some fervently, and some, I thought, who scowl'd.
Not once, throughout, I saw my Pedro's face,
His post, his form, alone proclaim'd him mine.
And, now, the worship clos'd; the several choirs
Still'd their responsions; and the organ ceas'd;
The lights wax'd dimmer; and th' exultant host
Resum'd their muffled trim; the throne-crown'd corpse,
Myself, was curtain'd from my straining eyes;
And the huge bell again knell'd forth its moan.

Now, from the pile, the slow procession wound ;
 My Catafalque invisibly propell'd
 Midst flaring ranks of torchmen, who illum'd,
 League after league, night's dark and ghostly pall.
 Tho' I saw every thing, it seem'd as tho'
 Not one, around, saw me ; nor when the line
 Pass'd in, nor when, returning, they pass'd out ;
 And this itself was hideous ! When we came
 (I follow'd in my trance where Pedro led)
 'To Alcobaça—well I knew the spot,
 My pilgrimage at times—a royal tomb
 Of purest marble smote upon my eyes,
 And men were busy with its open'd jaws.
 A halt—a bustle—something creak'd and strain'd—
 I wot not how, I stood by Pedro's side,
 And he groan'd audibly within the folds
 That hid his anguish—hark, another creak,
 As he sobb'd forth—“ My Ignez, dust to dust.”
 I tried to check him ; then, I shriek'd for fright ;
 Struggled to fly ; the struggle shook my frame,
 And rous'd my children ; little Diniz' hands
 Patting my cheeks, amidst his sister's cries,
 Woke me—to feel I was not where I dream'd,
 But not to feel the haunting of the scene,
 Its grim impression, less—oh, send for Pedro,
 Recall him home, and Ignez, then, may rest.
[Sinks back, much exhausted.]

QUEEN.

You are exhausted, child : our Sister, here,
 Will lead you to your couch—and we will sit
 About you, and converse till you are sooth'd.

ARCHBISHOP.

You will not dream again ; but taste repose
 The sounder for the suff'ring you have pass'd.
 Our business with our Sister shall await
 Till sleep o'ertake you, and refresh your mind.

QUEEN.

I long to kiss the children as they lie
 Lock'd in the slumbers you shall soon partake.

*[They go out, IGNEZ supported and soothed by SUPERIOR
 and the QUEEN ; the ARCHBISHOP following.]*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Convent of Santa Clara, at Coimbra. The KING in council with GONÇALVES, COELHO, and PACHECO.*

GONÇALVES.

OUR lodgement is complete : our men at arms
Are planted all around : and scouts, beyond,
Are charg'd to bar new comers : are they not ?
At hand, within, your body-guard and friends
Permit no exit, and o'erawe control.
Our spies have laid the Spaniard by the heels.
Nor desperado, nor intruder, here
Can penetrate ; and though the jade should call
In shrieks upon her paramour, your heir,
He is afar—so, now, behoves to act !
No halting, now, when heav'n hath smooth'd the way,
And plac'd the sacrifice within your grasp !
Her Majesty and Braga's meddling Priest
(We had your royal leave) are leagues remov'd,
Misled to seek their Sovereign they'd controul,
Where, since he sojourns here, he'll not be found.
We strike, to put away from our dear land
Thy Pedro's bane—the mischief which would, else,
Climb to dispute succession.

KING.

We have heard.

This is not new ; the novelty I shun—
Were ye not moles—is patent as the day ;
We are within a sanctuary,

GONÇALVES.

Whereat

Nothing unclean should harbour : yet, our scheme
Rais'd no such scruples, yester-eve ?

COELHO.

The King

Himself 's a sanctuary.

GONÇALVES.

And, at *his* shrine,
His people's fate craves refuge.

KING.

Had ye brains,
Were ye the men to serve me as ye ought,
And, by right means, to extricate the realm,
We might be safe, and ours, a hundred ways,
And, yet, might spare her blood.

GONÇALVES.

My liege ! my liege !
Oh, dread the fiend, the canting, glozing, fiend,
Who 'd whisper, in your yielding nature's ear,
" Spare, spare her blood"—Yes, spare her—to revolve,
Her life was in debate ; in Pedro's thoughts,
Thy son's, to pour fresh poison ; and to urge
(Ambition, then, hell-mated with Revenge)
New disobedience, hardihood, and crime ;
Till doating Pedro shall displace his heir,
And " spare her," and her bastards—for the throne !
Retreat's impossible, since we are launch'd ;
Our presence blabs our purpose.

COELHO.

Past dispute !

KING.

Ye'd have me in a trap !

GONÇALVES.

Our Ruler owns
He came of his accord ?

KING.

We will not strike
Here, in this holy house.

GONÇALVES.

Altho' the blow
Is purpos'd holily ?

COELHO.

The holier place
Stamps the deed holier.

PACHECO.

Is it so ?

GONÇALVES.

Do'st doubt ?

PACHECO.

I ? No ! Our Lord approves Gonçalves' view !
And reason seems to urge it.

KING.

Ye conspire ! [*PACHECO is abashed.*]

GONÇALVES.

To save thy heir from ruin ; to preserve [*rapidly*]
The Lusian diadem from stain ; to keep
Succession lawful ; civil war afar
From Prince and people ; by some drops of blood,
To obviate a deluge ; to redeem
An erring son to duty ; and his son,
(The first-born to the throne, when thou and Pedro,
After long glorious lives, are laid in rest)
To hold secure from bastards of the line,
Without this sacrifice, preferr'd to him !

[*A Deputation of Nuns enter.*]

NUN.

Our sister, our superior of this house,
By us, presents her homage, which the King
Left her no chance to tender, as he cross'd
Her threshold—choosing, when he hurried through,
So unexpectedly, and so begirt,
To pass unusher'd—but her duty's call,
Her pledge to heaven, and her respect for him,
Bid her demand an audience,

GONÇALVES.

Of the King ? [*fiercely interrupting.*]

NUN.

Ay, of the King ; our King, Sir, as thine own !

KING.

Another time !

NUN.

No other time than now !

We press as we are bidden.

GONÇALVES.

Ye are bold.

COELHO.

No other time than now ?

PACHECO.

Our hope is wrath.

KING.

Dismiss them. Warn them, we will not be known.

GONÇALVES.

Our Lord will not be known.

NUN.

The King is, here,
A visitor; the house belongs to God.

GONÇALVES.

The King is God's viceregent. Get ye hence,
Each to her cell, or men who hold ye cheap,
And solely wield their swords as they are bid,
Shall turn the keys upon ye: warn your Dame,
The King will not be known; and bid her keep,
(As she would have no treasons to her charge)
Her closet, till himself and we go forth.

NUN.

The King doth warn our Dame; and she, by us,
Doth warn the King; demanding to be heard:
Duty with her is paramount—She'll come!

[*The Nuns depart.*]

GONÇALVES.

Another cause for promptitude. [Pointing after them.]

O King,

My Master, who hast made me what I am,
What other motive can thy servant have
Than thy own safety?

KING.

Safety?

GONÇALVES.

Nothing less!

For, should this she, whose offspring draw so near
Fernando, thy sole grandson, as to be
Of his own mettle by the father's side,
Should she, alas, the Sorceress who beguiles,
And doth forbid this son to wed again,
As thou art pledg'd he shall—the State, in thee—
Should she—as sure she doth—affect the crown,

KING.

Thou know'st she doth?

GONÇALVES.

By instinct; I may add,
By observation, and some strange events
That scar'd, and scare me, still.

PACHECO.

Some omens? speak,
We have great faith in omens.

KING.

Name them not!
And yet—but, no—thou shalt not.

COELHO.

Wouldst thou, Sire,
Be re-assured,

KING.

Ye'd say that, we should hear,
Whether we would, or no ?

PACHECO.

Long live the King !
His will is ours.

GONÇALVES.

The tokens are suppress'd

KING.

And, yet, my conscience craves them.

GONÇALVES.

Woulds't thou act,
(And, as I live, the stress for action's come)
They might keep peace betwixt thy need and thee,
A peace that 's not to spurn !

PACHECO.

The King will hear ?

COELHO.

Rather, will act !

GONÇALVES.

As soon as he hath heard.

Have I thy leave to utter ? [*To the King.*] I was call'd,
'Tis since we are in Coimbra, to the bed
Whereon a ruin'd gentleman was laid,
And he was near to pass : his long career,
His many failings, errors, and his sins,
And they were sins of weight, distress'd him not,
Beyond his hope of pardon,—save one crime,
Tho' unaccomplish'd,

KING.

Ha ?

GONÇALVES.

Which he was hir'd
To perpetrate,

KING.

For Jesu's sake, go on !

GONÇALVES.

But, at the threshold of his dread attempt,
He fail'd thro' accident, and, bearing fate
Unto another,

KING.

Whom

GONÇALVES.

Himself was found
Sore mangled, to be carried to his bed,
And, ere he died, to send for me.

KING.

Thee? thee?

GONÇALVES.

I trac'd, despite his faintings and his fears,
Coherence 'midst their incoherences;
One hideous revelation glar'd thro' all,—
There were—Conspirators!—and he was hir'd
By those whom, first, he screen'd, but

PACHECO.

Who are these?

[IGNEZ enters, rapidly, with her children DINIZ and BEATRIZ.]

IGNEZ.

There, there he sits, your royal Grandsire, babes!
Our Pedro's father ye ne'er saw before.
Look on him, till he note upon your brows
The stamp of Pedro and his own true line.
Thou would'st not hear, O King, my advocate,
God's servant, and, in this his house, thy Host:
Therefore, of mine own right, as Pedro's wife,
(Tis time to disabuse thee, and proclaim—

[GONÇALVES offers to interrupt.]

Forbid that traitor's tongue—that such I am)
As Pedro's wife, I stand before his sire,
And do demand, while Pedro is away,
For these dear pledges of his boundless love,
And one beside, who's sick, and left behind,
Protection of their father's father—thee!

GONÇALVES.

Believe her not, my Sov'reign!—Had thy son
So fearfully transgress'd,

IGNEZ.

Transgress'd?

COELHO.

Rebell'd!

GONÇALVES.

Worse than transgress'd. So parricidally
Destroy'd thy lifelong purpose, as to wed
Yon woman,

IGNEZ.

Woman?

COELHO.
Ay!

IGNEZ.
What, ruffian, thou?

KING.
Peace! [To all.

IGNEZ.
I will have no peace!

KING.
Thou would'st be heard?

GONÇALVES.
Not He!—Had Pedro so embroil'd the State,
He would have boasted his offence, betimes,
He who lacks not the wilfulness, and lives
To grieve his parents, and to thwart their laws.

IGNEZ.
O Sire! thy son, for very love's excess,
Did wrong (*we* suffer for it) to conceal
That which he should have blazon'd to the world,
If only to protect his lawful wife,
From slander, in his absence, and attempts,
First to seduce,

KING.
Thou'rt sane?

IGNEZ.
And, next, to kill!

KING.
Saidst, to seduce?

GONÇALVES.
The King's in council here.

IGNEZ.
No place for Kings in council—as no place
For hoary traitors to attempt the *wife*
Of the King's heir.

GONÇALVES.
She raves.

COELHO.
The trick is stale.

PACHECO.
The children weep. [As somewhat moved.

GONÇALVES.
The bastards!

IGNEZ.

He on high
Smite thee with leprosy, thou fiend! not man,
Who would disparage such poor lambs as these,
(Oh, kiss me, cling to me, my Pedro's babes,
I can no more). [*sobs.*]

GONÇALVES.

Dismiss her, Sire.

IGNEZ.

Nay, nay, [*rapidly.*]
We *will* not leave—the great All-seer knows,
Who hears me to the world again proclaim,
(And, may I speak my last, if I speak false)
I am the Infante's wife—thy heir's—thy son's—
And there sits he who, foil'd of his desires
To stamp me an adultress, for revenge,
Would kill me and my babes, my precious babes,
And set thy son in arms against thee,

GONÇALVES.

Cease!

KING.

I must hear more.

IGNEZ.

Our Pedro is like thee,
Woe will betide who harm us.

GONÇALVES.

She doth threat;
O King, dismiss them.

IGNEZ.

Father, King, in one!
Dismiss thy false advisers. Here I stand,
A weak, lone, woman 'gainst a band of men;
A mother trembling for her sweet babes' lives;
A wife without her husband; one that's wrong'd,
Before a dread tribunal where she sees
Her plum'd wrong-doer plac'd beside her Judge.
I plead at disadvantage such as ne'er
O'erwhelm'd a helpless female.

KING.

You plead home.

IGNEZ.

I plead not for myself, but these, and him
Whose love is adoration—whose despair
(Let it not loose to rend ye, Thoughtless Men!)

[*To the three Counsellors.*]

Were Frenzy drunk with blood—I fear not death,
But I do fear, for these, the orphans' doom,
And madness past redemption, for their sire.
Dismiss thy false advisers— [pauses]—
for a space,
Some paltry seconds?

GONÇALVES.
Let the King beware.

IGNEZ.
The King is not afraid: the King is fam'd
A brave man, as the Moorish widows mourn.
Most formidable, doubtless, I appear,—
A mother with her babes; a timid wife;
A daughter, suppliant at her father's knees:
Ye are afraid: your ruler scorns to fear.

KING.
'Tis reasonable.

IGNEZ.
Pity, in *his* breast,
Shows valour merciful. Look up, my gems,
Your grandsire yields us privacy.

KING.
Ye hear? [to Counsellors.

GONÇALVES.
So, *she* commands us! [aside]

PACHECO.
How could he refuse?

GONÇALVES.
We must refuse—in action!

PACHECO.
If we can.

GONÇALVES.
Beware the sorceress—beware, beware! [to the King.
She raves, or schemes—you'll need Gonçalves soon.

[GONÇALVES, COELHO, and PACHECO, go out slowly;
the two first furiously scowling and whispering to-
gether.—IGNEZ draws nearer to the KING.

IGNEZ.
I knew my King a man! unmanly those
Who would excite him 'gainst our harmless lives.
Oh! let me weep for thankfulness, my babes,
That your good grandsire hath dismiss'd our foes,
And grants his hapless kin his unwatch'd ear.
Down on your little knees, and pray that Sire,
Who is the Sire of all, he spare his life,

(Your father's father's whom we kneel to claim)
 Unto a ripe and glory-crown'd old age.
 Make his white hairs, when they shall snow his brow,
 A rev'rence, and a balm ; and this kind deed
 To us, so weak for want of Pedro near,
 Be canoniz'd on earth, and writt'n above,
 First of such deeds, on yon recording spheres.

KING.

If thou be wife to Pedro, he hath us'd
 Both thee and us most ill, to hide the truth.

IGNEZ.

If? I have sworn ; thou dost not doubt mine oath ?

KING.

Then, dost thou doubt thy husband us'd us ill ?

IGNEZ.

He us'd me ill, my pride of all the earth
 In whom I live ?

KING.

Ourself, at least, may chide ?

IGNEZ.

If he hath err'd, as we have cause to rue,
 My suff'ring is not blinded, by its pangs,
 To blame this sad concealment, nor perceive
 It sprung of perfect love ; and, I can vouch,
 Of filial fear to give his parents pain
 Where need was not immediate.

KING.

'Tis averr'd,
 Thy love for Pedro would affect the Crown,
 And thrust aside succession.

IGNEZ.

Who is he
 The king of lies hath enter'd, to destroy
 Thy peace and ours ?—Gonçaves ! whom I charg'd,
 And charge again, with treason to the throne,
 In plotting to seduce, and, now, to crush
 The Heir-Apparent's wife—a simple thing,
 So happy in her Pedro ; unto whom
 He is the world, and all for which she'd live ;
 Could she persuade him to renounce his claim,
 And lift his young Fernando next to thee,
 She would rain tears of ecstasy, and fly
 With her soul's idol, and her being's stay,
 To blessed privacy, which none should share,
 And none, till death, invade.

KING.

Thou *speak'st* me fair.

IGNEZ.

Thou know'st not how we love thee ; I, as stirr'd,
Of instinct, to regard my husband's Sire,
The author of *his* being who is mine :
And he, thy Son (altho' unduteous, once,
To mark some fascination in poor me,
Unworthy as I was, and, so, to wed)
Yet, in each best respect, as mov'd, and bound,
To hold thee dear ; to have thee in his thoughts ;
To pray, while we repeat him, for thy life ;
To fear to anger thee, and cause thee pain,
As this concealment testifies,

KING.

Such fears [*Interrupting.*]

Should work prevention ; they limp forth too late,
When the wound rankles, to assist its cure.

IGNEZ.

Did he not name our firstborn after thee ?
And, when our cherub died,—I thought the wound
More heal'd, more heal'd, but nature will have way,—
Did not the strong man, for his anguish, howl,
And call the sweet corpse, which he hugg'd for grief,
His Father's miniature ? thine ; thine ; while I
Was firmer to console him, since my pangs,
Divided 'twixt my infant and its sire,
Wanted the oneness to be so intense
As his—that long convulsion of the heart
Which, scarce, I calm'd, at last.

KING.

Enough, enough !

You plead too piteously ; forbear such strains,
They touch some chords that rack me past support.

IGNEZ.

We do not love thee ? *we* affect thy crown ?
This is thy own Queen's namesake : nearer, babes !
Your grandsire melts, to love ye as his own.
Oh, for her sake, your duteous, virtuous *wife*,
Kiss the poor child you never saw before,
And, if she irk thee, ne'er shall see again.
Diniz is jealous now, a kiss for him !
Look in their little eyes, and bless them both,
And him, the tiny suff'rer laid within,
They ne'er shall baulk Fernando of the throne.

KING.

Ignez, you conquer ! all shall yet be well.

IGNEZ.

Oh, could'st thou see how like to God they grow
 Who help the helpless—smile, my charmers, smile !
 Thou would'st believe me when I look my thanks,
 And have not words to pour them. Once again,
 Give all thy benediction. Oh, my King,
 My Father, let me kiss thy gen'rous hand ;
 Nor, since thou, now, wilt shield us, take more heed
 Of those who have assail'd us, and belied,
 Than to ensure—Best fountain of our strength !—
 They serve *thyselves* with loyalty—if so,
 Forget their wrongs to us, and let them thrive.

KING.

All shall be well.

IGNEZ.

We'll send for Pedro home.

[KING caresses children, and leads the way forth.

SCENE II.—*The SERVING MAN enters to an open spot outside the Garden-Walls of the Convent of Santa Clara.*

SERVING MAN.

This is the fatal height from which he pitch'd,
 The slope beneath rough-hewn to break his bones.
 This outer spot is still, but what, within,
 Hath barr'd the Convent-gates, and, far and near,
 Plac'd sentinels, whose vigilance I've shunn'd.
 Perchance the villains who had hir'd his sword
 To murder—whom did ne'er escape his lips—
 Perchance their hiding-place is this, and power
 Musters, in wrath, to seize them, and arraign.
 The buzz of men, though *they* are hid from view,
 Steals o'er the garden-walls: the hurrying lights
 Flash by the crevices: a hasty tread
 Catches the ear, by fits: there's something ripe
 Or to detect, or punish, woe's the task,
 In yon mysterious hold.

[*Pauses.*] Myself am safe ;
 [An armed WATCHER appears in the distance. He
 steals towards the SERVING MAN, and, halting under
 covert of a tree, listens.

I shar'd not his intention ; to this hour,
 I have not fathom'd it ; and only glean'd
 It was most criminal, not innocent,
 As he, at first, maintain'd, and I suppos'd.
 When, in the train, collected in such haste

Which tended on Gonçalves to this town,
 I found Giraldo in his small command
 To keep our troop together, and forbid
 The lag-behind and curious to commune ;
 I thought of our first meeting overnight,—
He starv'd of cold and hunger, 'midst the din
Of Palace-revelry—I little thought
 Of murder brooding in his needy brain,
 Or death so soon to him ; and least, indeed,
 That *I* should tend his bed, and, with the priest,
 See him—we two alone—plac'd low in earth.
 A hurried burial, some, behind the screen,
 Prescrib'd and paid for—scantily, I judge,
 Or the sour priest had furnish'd better state,
 Followers and fun'ral show ; this corpse had none.
 I would have forfeited a week's full pay,
 Could I have left the bier, and scann'd *his* face
 Who shot across us, smother'd in his cloak,
 And started in such terror as we pass'd.
 Just as we turn'd the corner, I look'd back,
 Yon portals were his refuge, I could swear.
 How dismal in the twilight they appear.
 I'd rather lurk, without, than feast, within.
 Was it not strange, a man so slightly held,
 So petty in his temporary post,
 As this now-dead Giraldo, whom no kin,
 Nor old acquaintance, follow'd to the tomb,
 When he lay ill, that he should so presume
 To post me to Gonçalves ? stranger still,
 Gonçalves did not storm, as he is prone,
 But sent large aid instead ? If those who serve
 For his chance-escort, when Gonçalves needs,
 Be car'd for as they never were before,
 Better for them—In this suspicious case,
 Giraldo's, I will hope the motive 's pure.
 Ere he confess'd his purpose, for his plight,
 I pitied him ; and, since, his shocking fate
 Still bids some pity linger, which is fain
 To curse his betters, whosoe'er they be,
 Who brib'd his desp'rate state, and urg'd him on.
They murder'd, when they purpos'd murder—*He*,
 When he took hire to give their purpose birth.
 The hireling 's doom'd—his hirers' turn is next.

[*pauses.*]

[*Gives a last look of horror at the spot, and is about to
 depart, when the WATCHER comes forth.*]

WATCHER.

Who's he without the pass-word ?

SERVING MAN.

Lisbon-town.

WATCHER.

Good, for the morning: it is chang'd since noon.

SERVING MAN.

I had it of—*[stops short]*

WATCHER.

Of whom?

SERVING MAN.

I know not whom.

WATCHER.

You might have sail'd ere dinner—since, you're fast,
 Unless your Know-not-whom should send some bird
 To chirp the counter-charm—not “Lisbon-town.”

SERVING MAN.

I am unarm'd.

WATCHER.

Or you'd resist—'twere best,
 For my own safety, you were lodg'd—come on.
 Our captains on the skirts have much to sift.
 'Twas ugly luck that set you to commune
 With yonder ugly spot, and I to note.

SERVING MAN.

Gonçalves gave the password.

WATCHER.

'Tis not mine
 To winnow truth from lies. Gonçalves, eh?
 I may not judge: and risk I will not run.
 So march, and claim Gonçalves if you will.

[SERVING MAN goes out in custody of the WATCHER.]

SCENE III.—*An Apartment of the Convent.*—COELHO and
 PACHECO in conference.

PACHECO.

Much for the best; my heart hath ne'er approv'd
 The plot to shed her blood.

COELHO.

No, not “the best;”

This sparing may re-act upon ourselves,
 And plunge us in disaster: have you solv'd
 What project snatch'd Gonçalves from our side,
 When order'd from the Presence?

PACHECO.

Who could solve ?

COELHO.

Himself, if he were with us.

PACHECO.

Would he were.

His absence should be short.

COELHO.

'Tis, now, too long.

PACHECO.

Should he turn round, and shift the blame on *us* ?

COELHO.

If he should *dare*, at least, we 're two to one.

PACHECO.

What of her accusation ?

COELHO.

Woman's wit,

To spoil her foe, and earn a mightier friend.

PACHECO.

A falsehood ?

COELHO.

Fashion'd with consummate skill ;

The feature best for *us*, it taints but *him*.

PACHECO.

Therefore, should *he* desert us, gaining force

To darken *him*, and prove *we* did no wrong.

COELHO.

The King is too impetuous to discern

Who dup'd, and who were dup'd, if she prevail.

PACHECO.

Now, should he burst upon us, in his wrath,

And rate us, ere Gonçalves reappear,

What were your answer ?

COELHO.

We may both insist,—

And boldly look the truth which we maintain,—

Gonçalves urg'd the danger which his tongue

Taught us was imminent ; and we believ'd ;

And so, for very loyalty, we err'd,

If erring.

PACHECO.

And ask pardon.

COELHO.

Hold! the King
Is violent; the further we succumb,
The more he 'll strive to humble us.

PACHECO.

And yet,
Only Gonçalves hath the tact, none else,
To brave him, and to argue to his face.
We need our champion back.

COELHO.

A step! a step! [*They listen.*]
His measur'd tread?

PACHECO.

And not the King's—We're safe.
[GONÇALVES enters, wrapped in a mantle, and speaking to himself.]

GONÇALVES.

I hate to cross a fun'ral; but to cross
His of all others, at this crisis, his!
It haunts me; but, to falter were to fail.

[*Takes off mantle.*]

I had not time to tell ye:—hath the King
Broken the witch's chains to sally forth
And pour his vehemence upon your heads?

PACHECO.

We have been undisturb'd; tho' ill at ease;
Tormented with the fear that our defence,
If the King broke upon us, ere yourself
Arriv'd to be our spokesman, might not prove
Concordant with the facts that you possess'd,
Nor potent to sustain us.

GONÇALVES.

Till *I* came! [*Sarcastically*]
When will ye walk alone? I shall not last
For ever; what, if ye survive me?

COELHO.

Speak
In terms to shape our conduct, not to chide:
We may need forethought.

GONÇALVES.

Guidance!

PACHECO.

Be our guide.

GONÇALVES.

I had not time to tell ye, when this minx
 Stagger'd the King, and turn'd him from our views,
 Mocking my years with lust to gild her lies,
 I gaug'd our danger; and dar'd not delay
 To prate of it; but sallied forth, to thwart.
 I had not answer'd, when the King took breath,
 (But that I left abruptly as I did,
 And us'd each moment to the best account,)
 We were at liberty, and not immur'd,
 In dungeons, on our passage to our graves.
 I've seen the captains—those within these walls,
 And some about the town, whom I had plac'd,
 My creatures, for our safety—

PACHECO.

We 're secure?

[*Gonçalves looks at him but replies not.*]

GONÇALVES.

It is my will we try the usual means,
 Feign to submit, and, so, contrive to rule.
 If we should fail—we shall not!—still, your “if”
 Was nothing underrated—should we fail,
 The King will find no gaolers at his beck,
 Not for ourselves; the case shall be extreme—
 To save our lives alone—they 're found for him!

[*The KING enters, agitated with rage.*]

KING.

Still, ye conspire? dismiss our armed men!
 Fly from our presence, would ye be preserv'd
 From present wrath, and permanent disgrace.
 What, do ye hesitate? I'll rouse my guards,
 And give them orders ye were loth to brook.
 Ye would have had me shed a lady's blood
 My son hath wedded; and her pretty babes
 Ye would have orphan'd; and upon my head,
 Their Grandsire's, and their King's, pull'd down the curse
 Of God and man that I espous'd your crime.
 Why speak ye not? hath shame transfix'd ye dumb?
 Ignez is innocent, and ye condemn'd.
 Beg for your lives, or Pedro shall be found
 To sit in judgment on ye, while your King,
 Ye had so nearly snar'd, shall see ye fall,
 Without regret, as justice reaps its due.
 I am incens'd to madness—clear this house!
 Dismiss these armed men! what want these courts

Of peace and pure religion with the bands
That wait on execution? [*Walks about in agitation.*

GONÇALVES, *catching the hem of the KING's robe, falls
on one knee*—COELHO and PACHECO *do the same.*

GONÇALVES.

Sire, we kneel,

Devoted subjects of a mighty King,
Whose fame for love of truth pervades the world.
We kneel for audience!

[*KING disengages himself and walks away.*

If our long career

Of service may deserve so small a boon?

[*Pauses; the KING does not reply.*

We may have err'd, but if we err'd, O King,
Believe us it was rev'rence for yourself,
Care for your honour,

KING.

What! the threadbare tale

Ye wrought with, till your dupe had nigh burst forth

A murderer? this, and nought but this, your plea?

Grovel no longer! stand before your fate!

And look your injur'd master in the face! [*They rise.*

GONÇALVES.

At least, one duty I must not forego,

But crave you to reserve your ire for *me*.

Admit these to your pardon; tho' myself

Fail to partake that grace; for I, alone,

Holding my duty lay in such resort,

Furnish'd my Comates, each, on either hand,

With such sad fears, and facts; and I, alone,

Propos'd, in our extremity, the cure

Which, solely from their zeal, themselves approv'd.

Their King, at first, did likewise. He may change,

Who reigns, a Potentate above control;

May not his servants, who have done no more

Than hearken, as he did, and, then, consent?

[*Pauses.*

Restore them to your favour! Sire, on me,

Visit the error—crime, if so you will,

To be in error—wrong intent I spurn.

Oh! may your Patron-saint, and holy vows,

Succour you, still, when I am cast aside.

[*The KING starts at the last words.*

These, these are pardon'd?

KING.

Thy sole self accus'd?

[*Fiercely.*

GONÇALVES.

Ay, willingly, if your great idol Truth,
Still utter condemnation, when I'm crush'd.

[*The King again starts.*]

KING.

Thou wast the cause, and they the less to blame;
I would not be unjust.

PACHECO.

The King is great !

COELHO

His character for justice unapproach'd.

GONÇALVES.

One last advice, in mercy to my fall,
Permit me to bequeath you. Midst these storms
Of foreign trouble, and internal broil,
Seek not for other pilots : I mark none,
Of honesty and talent so combin'd,
To stead you at this crisis : these are tried;
These are sufficient when myself am gone ;
And these have had your pardon.

KING.

You presume,
And mete yourself dismissal : 'tis for me
To fix the mode and season.

GONÇALVES.

Powers of good !
Grant I have been deceiv'd ; that all was false,
Unreal, visionary in my brain ;
That Ignez be, in fact, Dom Pedro's wife,
And, therefore, scorn'd my mission from his Sire ;
That France may lower her tone, and be content
To lose the Heir of Portugal, because
His mistress calls him husband ; that this France
Ask for no vouchers,

KING.

Traitor, hold your peace !
This is too much ; past bearing—past belief—
You heap my difficulties mountain-high,
And taunt me to o'ercome them by myself.

GONÇALVES.

These have been tried,

KING.

"Tis thou hast been found out!
 "These have been tried"? spoil'd copies of thyself!

GONÇALVES.

O Sire, sire, sire! I hesitate, to say,
 Or to keep silence. Take my knightly sword; [*Offering it.*
 Dismiss me; yet, still duteous to the last,
 I would unfold the tale, but just commenc'd,
 When Ignez, who hath lodg'd her in your breast,
 Rush'd in to check its progress: that reveal'd,
 I will retire, to wait your royal will,
 And she shall conquer if *yourself* condemn.

KING.

What tale?

GONÇALVES.

The broken gentleman's, whose lips
 Are clos'd for ever. But for my desire
 To succour him, for he had serv'd me oft,
 This tale had slept with him, and ne'er been broach'd.

KING.

I have o'erlook'd this tale; go on, go on.

GONÇALVES.

How far had I proceeded?

KING.

'Twas cut short,
 By her unbidden entrance, at the point,
 There where the profligate was hir'd by some
 Who had conspir'd to murder, by his means—
 Whom? whom?

GONÇALVES.

Fernando, lost Constança's child,
 [KING, COELHO, and PACHECO, *all evince astonishment.*
 The meek Constança of the broken heart.

KING.

My Grandson, and our Pedro's lawful heir?
 Fernando who some day should fill our seat?

GONÇALVES.

So 'twas confess'd.

KING.

Whom, whom did he accuse?
 Who had conspir'd? Hast left them still at large?

GONÇALVES.

His Stepdam—if she be thy Pedro's wife—
 And him, her natural brother, and her spy,
 As we of late discover'd.

KING.

He 's secur'd ?

GONÇALVES.

He is.

KING.

Were others leagu'd ?—Fernando's life
Is precious as mine own—were others leagu'd ?

GONÇALVES.

These two alone. Again, and o'er again,
The penitent, in intervals of sense,
Nam'd these, and these alone.

KING.

Didst ask the wretch ?

GONÇALVES.

And cross-examined him, as I've the tact ;
There were none else.

KING.

Fernando, then, is safe ?
But wherefore keep me in the dark till now ?

GONÇALVES.

Three days are barely pass'd ; with sleepless care,
I took precautions like a prudent man,
And spar'd you much anxiety the while.
This Stepdam was already in our pow'r,
My agents watch'd her Spaniard, and have seiz'd.
Fernando's tutors, and our friends at court,
Receiv'd expresses not to quit their posts,
With hints to whet their vigilance,

KING.

Right ! right !

Who was the broken gentleman ?

GONÇALVES.

The same

Who, at Tarifa, stemm'd the Moorish charge,
But, since, had lost his substance, and become
A gambler of the class beyond reclaim.
I help'd him oft ; and he was apt at need,
And join'd my sudden escort to this town.
The Spaniard had preceded ; it is plain
They had foreplotted, and met here for means,
And orders from this Ignez. When the King
Arriv'd from Lisbon, 'twas, at once, contriv'd
This bravo should steal back, and deal the blow.

KING.

What casualty destroy'd him ?

GONÇALVES.

As he sat

Under the convent-walls, conceal'd and lone,
Waiting to mount the horse the Spaniard rides,
A portion of the time-corroded wall
Fell on his head, and smote him to the brain.
The fragment may be trac'd upon the spot,
And the fresh gap above it. To be brief,
Some stranger bore him where the miscreant lodg'd,
And he, in dire dismay at death's approach,
Sent for your servant, and confess'd.

KING.

Give thanks,

That Providence cut short their bad designs.

GONÇALVES.

We must ensure the future.

KING.

'Tis ensur'd,

Fernando's safety is achiev'd.

GONÇALVES.

So long

As Pedro may be absent.

KING.

How "so long" ?

COELHO.

Ignez will blind him.

GONÇALVES.

And deny our facts.

KING.

This brother should disclose them, tho' the rack
Rend them, by piecemeal, from him.

GONÇALVES.

Would this Eve

Who 'd lose you this bright world of Lusian sway,
This sleek, insinuating, tearful dame,
This Stepdam, be she concubine, or wife,
(In either case abhorrent to your views)
Would she, with doating Pedro at her side,
Permit her brother's tortures ?

KING.

Who is he,

Or son, or subject, that shall curb our will ?

GONÇALVES.

Pedro would dare, if Iñez prompt his rage.
The rebel, hitherto; more rebel, then!

KING.

But *ye* would strengthen me, and set the law
Impreguably around us, and our throne.

GONÇALVES.

As far as in us lay.

KING.

Dost doubt our means?

GONÇALVES.

Not if we 're wise to use them. These at hand
Suggest their own completeness: but to seize
Her brother, and immure him, would not she,
For very dread of what we should extort,
Would she not plunge her Pedro into guilt,
To save her own detection?

COELHO.

She hath wit.

For Pedro is her slave.

GONÇALVES.

Her will, his law.

KING.

What guilt? The Syren, howsoe'er she charm,
Could never alienate him from his heir?

GONÇALVES.

The guilt we dread, if ere she see him more,
Would spare his son, and—might our tongues be loos'd
To show our honest fears—assail his sire,
Thee, for thy very virtues, thrust aside,
That vice may cease to quail, and Spain may win.

COELHO.

A parricidal guilt, which, dead to shame,
Would seek impunity upon the throne.

GONÇALVES.

Unless we crush its motive.

COELHO.

While we can.

KING.

Ye drive me mad.

PACHECO.

The King must be sustain'd.

COELHO.

A King to reign—no reed to be o'erthrown !

GONÇALVES.

Who, now, are traitors, we, or that false pair,
Sister and natural brother as they are !
And, may I warn my King as I believe,
The first most fell ; a traitress and no wife.

KING.

She cannot be so bad.

GONÇALVES.

Because her tongue
Is subtle, and her tears, as woman's can,
Roll at her will.

KING.

Her babes are free from guilt.

GONÇALVES.

But, hourly, are incentives to their dam,
To slay Fernando, or depose the King !
Therein, tho' guiltless, aspics, triply fang'd,
To creep and sting succession to its grave.

KING.

Ye drive me mad !

GONÇALVES.

Or she ?

COELHO.

Pronounce her doom.

GONÇALVES.

The children may be spar'd, were *she* remov'd ;
Their mother keeps them venomous.

PACHECO.

The King

Wanders !

GONÇALVES.

Alas ! bewilder'd how to choose ;
His gen'rous heart inclining him to spare ;
But his close peril forcing him to strike.

COELHO.

We must support the throne.

GONÇALVES.

Ere Pedro come,
Or France spread war and vengeance o'er the land.

KING.

My honour 's pledg'd.

COELHO.

In ignorance of harm.

GONÇALVES.

Honour, mis-pledg'd upon a false pretence,
Tracing the falsehood, is absolv'd its oath.

[*The KING covers his face in his robe.*]

COELHO.

Pronounce her doom, my liege! [*rising*]

PACHECO.

Ere Pedro rush

To mar security. [*rising*]

COELHO.

The King permits?

GONÇALVES.

Why are we here? the King is in our hands;
His honour—safety—we must save the realm:
Our task is terrible: but Fate ordains.

[*They rush forth, the KING for awhile concealing his face in his robe; at length, uncovering, he stares vacantly around.*]

KING.

What! are they gone? I made no sign? no sound
Escap'd my lips? O God, support me forth;
They must not, shall not,—I have pledg'd my word.
Her babes! her babes! their mother must be spar'd.

[*Hurries forth, staggering, and in terror.*]

SCENE IV.—*A quadrangular hall, in the interior of the Convent—a corridor around it. IGNEZ rushes out through a doorway on the ground-floor, darts across the hall, up one of the flights of stairs at its further extremity, and along the corridor, into a chief Apartment opening out of it.*

IGNEZ.

Ha! treach'rous King!—my babes! my babes! my babes!
Shriek for assistance! ring for Pedro! ring
All Coimbra to the rescue! help! ring! ring!

[*GONÇALVES, COELHO, and PACHECO, muffled up in their mantles, hurriedly pursue. GONÇALVES and PACHECO ascend one staircase, and COELHO, motioned by GONÇALVES to do so, the other. They meet at the door, which IGNEZ has closed upon them, and burst it open. Screams of the children from within.*]

My babes! my babes! kill me, but spare my babes!
Hide, children!—Ha! help, Pedro!—Monster-king!

[*Shrieks again, and, then, a dead silence.*]

[After a pause, GONÇALVES comes forth, followed by COELHO and PACHECO, all sword in hand. As they are descending the stairway, GONÇALVES exclaims—

GONÇALVES.

The sacrifice is o'er! Let's seek the King,
And hail him tenfold firmer on his throne.

COELHO.

A scuffle at the doors?

PACHECO.

And clash of swords?

We are surpris'd.

GONÇALVES.

Then, stand your ground like men.

[As they reach the body of the hall, the SUPERIOR of the Convent rushes in, with some armed men, headed by the Spanish CAVALIER.

SUPERIOR.

We are too late! the bloody deed's fulfill'd;
And these its slaughtermen had nigh escap'd.
Toll out the bell! alarm the outrag'd land!

[to some who hasten out.

Fell them to earth! Allegiance is a crime.
Proclaim King Pedro, ye who serv'd his Sire
Whose traitors cower before ye: seize! lay hold!

[Some advance, but the CAVALIER checks them.

These miscreants, these disloyal-hearted knaves,

[The bell begins tolling.

Have slain the Infante's wife—your future Queen!
God's house hath been polluted!—murder wrought!
A sacrilege of treason steep'd in gore!
Cut down these wolves before ye, in their sin;
Strike for King Pedro, and disown that King
Who spurns all sanctuaries and kingly oaths!

CAVALIER.

Back, back, my Liberators! whom God's will, *[PACHECO flies.*
And this his venerable servant's aid,
Sent as my summoners to vengeance—Back!
Stand for your lives, false traitors to your King!

[To GONÇALVES and COELHO.]

Unknightly dastards! Bye-words unto men!
Butchers! Assassins! Felons to your teeth!

GONÇALVES.

In the King's name, arrest this foreign spy!
We have the royal warrant for our act.

CAVALIER.

King Pedro's guards ! *[Pointing to those with him.]*

Himself is at our heels,

To execute whate'er we leave undone.

Stand for your recreant miserable lives,

Ye stabbers of a woman ! Cowards ! Slaves !

[CAVALIER rushes on them. They fight. COELHO receives a body-thrust, and totters out of sight.]

GONÇALVES fights on, desperately, and, at last, falls exclaiming,

GONÇALVES.

She is aveng'd—Giraldo—and the rest—

Gonçalves—hath to answer—spare the King ! *[dies.]*

[CAVALIER stands over the body.]

CAVALIER.

See to my sister—seek her precious babes,

Perchance this Demon miss'd them—is she dead ?

[To SUPERIOR, who, crossing herself, passes the dead body, ascends the staircase, and enters the apartment where IGNEZ lies murdered.]

[The KING enters below, feeble, and in trepidation.]

KING.

My eyes are failing me ; my senses swim.

What is this turmoil ? Ye have wrong'd your King.

I recollect a purpose on her life,

Spare her, Gonçalves, 'tis your King implores.

[The KING falls on his knees at a distance.]

CAVALIER.

There lies your instrument, O wicked King !

Dead as my gentle sister he defam'd.

Fly, ere your Son, whom I have summon'd home,

[Raising the KING who looks on him vacantly, and without speaking.]

Burst on your presence and destroy your sight.

[Cries and lamentations of the Nuns, and others, heard.]

[PEDRO, in riding accoutrements, as if just off a journey, rushes in madly, and, then, recoils at the scene.]

PEDRO.

I know it all ! I know it all ! she's slain !

I heard the murd'rous cries ; the women's wail.

Whom are ye watching, sirs ? what's there—a dog,

[Seeing the corpse of GONÇALVES.]

Carrión for kites ?—Who, who, yon grey hair'd man,

The semblance of my father, and the King,

But spotted o'er with blood?—Thou piece of clay,
 Devil-possess'd—no father—but a Cain
 Lodg'd on a throne to slay my being's life—
 Hear thy own flesh accurse thee!

[*The KING utters a cry of dismay.*

Bear him hence,

Ere in his breast I dig for that I've lost,
 And he hath ravish'd from me, and destroy'd.

Hence!

[*averting his face from him in horror.*

KING.

Pedro!

[*Broken-heartedly.*

PEDRO.

Name me not!

KING.

'Twas he!

[*Feebly pointing to the corpse of GONÇALVES.*

Forgive!

He did it:—'tis your father—oh, forgive!

[*Falls forward and dies.*

PEDRO.

Send for my children:—they are not cut off?

I dare not look on *her*.

[*Covering his face with his hands.*

CAVALIER.

The King is dead.

Rouse, rouse you, for your people's sake—Behold!

[*Pointing to the dead KING supported on his knee.*

Your royal, aged, Penitent's no more.

Pedro is King of Portugal.

PEDRO.

Away

All Kings and Kingdoms! on my bosom's throne

Lies a cold reeking corpse; my shell of man

Is blighted thro' and thro', and I am mad.

Bring me my children!

[*The SUPERIOR, during this phrensy, has descended with the children, they clinging to her, and evincing intense terror. She now approaches with them.*

SUPERIOR.

They at least are safe,

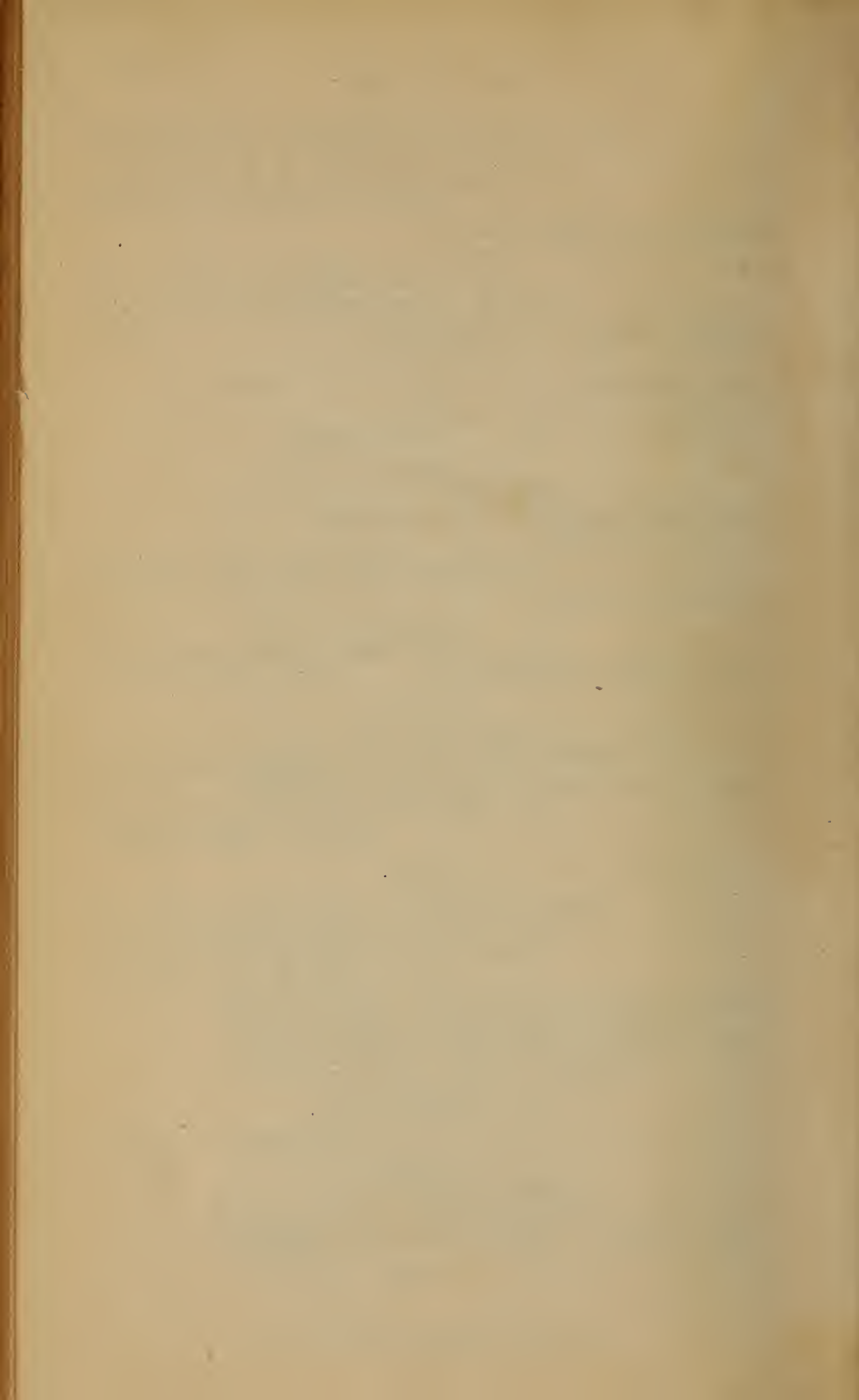
And live to comfort you.

PEDRO.

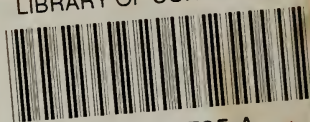
Their mother, Dame!

[*As he clasps the children to his bosom, with a cry of despair, the Curtain descends to a solemn Dirge.*

THE END.



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